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# THE LIFE OF

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE.

G. BARNETT SMITH.

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## THE LIFE

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# WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE,

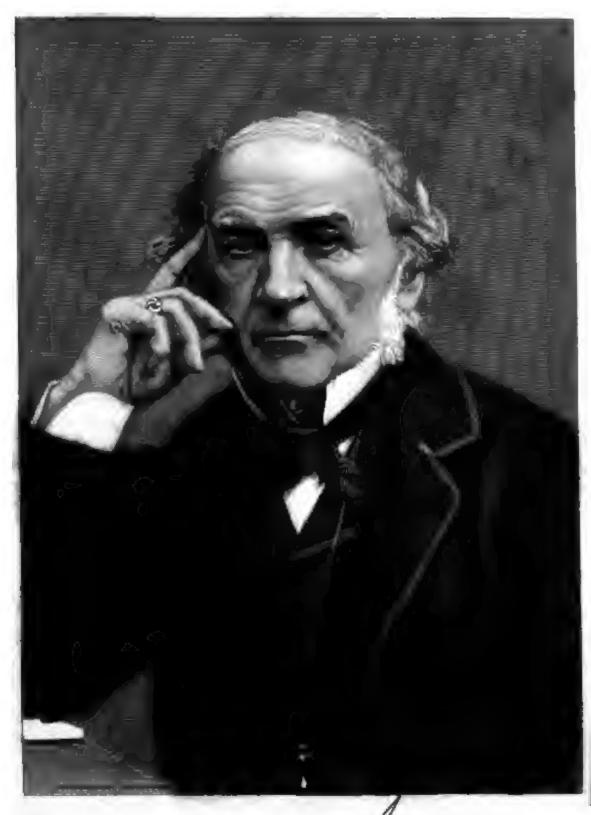
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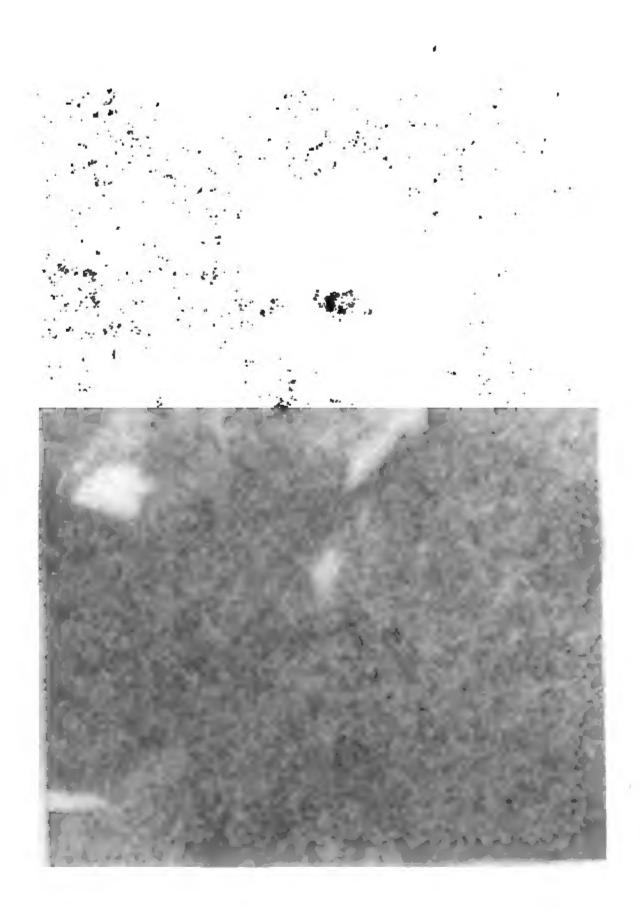
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# THE LIFE

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### THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

# WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE,

M.P., D.C.L., &c.

BY

## GEORGE BARNETT SMITH,

AUTHOR OF "SHELLEY: A CRITICAL BIOGRAPHY," "POETS AND NOVELISTS," &c.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

Second Edition.



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## PREFACE.

The leading purpose of this work is of a biographical and historical, rather than of a polemical character. It has been my object to place before the reader the story of Mr. Gladstone's life—and his relations to the great movements of his time—through the medium of his writings and speeches. In the Parliamentary portion of the work, I have been sparing of comment, for two reasons: first, to have discussed at length the manifold political acts of this eminent statesman would have expanded this biography greatly beyond its present dimensions; and, secondly, the period has not yet arrived when it is possible to estimate (even were I competent to do so) the full effect and influence of those great legislative measures with which Mr. Gladstone's name is associated. In a work of this kind it would be impossible for the author to conceal the nature of his political sentiments; neither have I the wish to do so; but a high admiration for the subject of this biography is not incompatible with an impartial recognition of certain errors of judgment. Nor, in sometimes strongly condemning the action of his opponents, have I endeavoured unduly to asperse

them. Amongst such opponents, during the last forty years, have been men entitled to the respect and gratitude of the country; and England is proud of all her sons who have rendered her distinguished service, be their party name Whig or Tory, Liberal or Conservative.

There are few, I believe—even amongst those who most differ from him—who would deny to Mr. Gladstone the title of a great statesman. With regard to his course on recent Foreign policy, my conviction is that 'time is on his side,' and is even now working out his justification; but be this course approved or disapproved, nothing can blot out the memory of his past achievements. In many respects, the long roll of English statesmen bears name more illustrious than his. The purity of his motives and the disinterestedness of his character stand confessed; and it may be said of him, as was said of Burke, that 'he brought to politics a horror of crime, a deep humanity, a keen sensibility, and a singular vivacity and sincerity of conscience.' The most conspicuous figure, perhaps, in the public life of our times, and universally esteemed for his talents, his eloquence, his high and pure feeling, and his personal worth, I commit to the reader, without further apology, this record of his career.

G. B. S.

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## THE LIFE

OF

#### THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

# WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE,

M.P., D.C.L., &c.

### CHAPTER I.

#### BIRTH AND ANCESTRY.

The Gladstones and the Middle Class—Sir John Gladstone—His Characteristics
—Origin of his Family—Its Settlement in Scotland for several Centuries—
Its Ramifications—John Gladstone, the future Premier's Father, born at
Leith—Removes to Liverpool—His Business Aptitude—Anecdote illustrating his Enterprise—A Merchant Prince—His Relations with Canning—
Philanthropic Efforts—A Member of the House of Commons—Created a
Baronet by Sir Robert Peel—William Ewart Gladstone's Scotch Descent
—Illustrious Pedigree claimed by Burke—The Early Training of Mr.
Gladstone—Surrounded by Conservative Influences—His Genius and Endowments—His Career an Interesting Study.

WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE—statesman, orator, and man of letters—sprang from the ranks of that powerful order which has justly been regarded as the backbone of England—namely, the middle class. This class has not only given stability to the country in the midst of social and political convulsions, but has contributed more than any other to the intellectual growth and eminence of the English-speaking race. The ad-

ventitious circumstances surrounding an aristocracy tend to produce habits of lethargy and indulgence—though there are illustrious examples in statesmanship, art, and letters, where the temptations to a life of ignoble ease have been successfully overcome,—while if we descend to the lowest grade in the social scale, we shall find that the evils of poverty have arrested the development of many men of original talent, who might have risen to be a power in, and an ornament to, the State. The middle classes have been subjected neither to the temptations of the aristocracy nor the privations of the order beneath them; and it is to these we owe, in a large measure, the prosperity and greatness of the They are men of shrewd, penetrating, and active minds, men who have acquired a stake in the country by their own indomitable energy and foresight; and they have ever been the most ardent defenders of individual and national liberty—a check upon the power of kings and nobles, and a breakwater against the threatening tide of democracy.

Typical of this race was Sir John Gladstone, father of the future Liberal Premier. Amongst all the merchant princes of Liverpool—and the records of the town are full of striking examples of self-made men—there are few whose career was so remarkable as that of the man who, originally the son of a cornmerchant, or corn-dealer, at Leith, near Edinburgh, ultimately became one of the most eminent merchants and shipowners in Lancashire. We shall the better approach to some understanding of the statesman's

complex character by briefly tracing the history of his father. In him were developed those practical qualities which have since been reflected in the sontenacity of purpose, strength of will, the power to grapple with opposing circumstances, and a breadth of mind which grasped the various aspects of a difficult problem at a glance. 'Diligent in business' was Sir John Gladstone's motto, and his distinguished son, so far from being ashamed of the means by which his family rose to opulence, not long ago, in frank and manly words, and words worth remembering, recounted his obligations to trade and commerce. In an address delivered at the Liverpool Collegiate Institute on the 21st of December, 1872, Mr. Gladstone said, 'I know not why commerce in England should not have its old families, rejoicing to be connected with commerce from generation to generation. It has been so in other countries; I trust it will be so in this country. I think it a subject of sorrow, and almost of scandal, when those families who have either acquired or recovered station and wealth through commerce, turn their backs upon it, and seem to be ashamed of it. It certainly is not so with my brother or with me. His sons are treading in his steps, and one of my sons, I rejoice to say, is treading in the steps of my father and my brother.'

Before alluding further to Mr. Gladstone's father, it will be convenient here to cite certain interesting facts as to the ramifications of the family. The chief stock of the Gladstanes or Gladstones—for the latter ortho-

graphy is of recent adoption—were originally settled in the parish of Liberton, in the upper ward of Clydesdale; but many generations subsequently a branch of the stock effected a settlement in the town of Biggar, in Lanarkshire. Through the name of Gladstanes or Gledstanes has been traced a custom in connection with the tenure of land, prevalent centuries ago in certain Scotch counties. It may also be noted that Gled is Lowland Scottish for a hawk, and that stancs signifies rocks. The estates of Arthurshiel and of Gladstanes, in Clydesdale, were held by a branch of the family of the Gladstanes through whom the subject of our biography traces his descent. Evidence exists of the former estate being held by a William Gladstanes early in the sixteenth century, and there are references to descendants of his in legal documents executed in 1623 and 1641 respectively. Some time before the year 1650 the estate of Arthurshiel was sold by John Gladstanes to James Brown, of Edmonstoun. At Biggar, William Gladstanes, son of the laird just named, pursued the business of a maltster, and died in 1728. He left three sons and one daughter. Of the sons, John, born in 1693 or 1694, followed the occupation of his father in the town of Biggar. He was an active man in the district, and a kirk elder. Being successful in business, he acquired a small property, to which he retired, dying in the year 1756. This John Gladstanes had a large family, consisting of five sons and six daughters. third son, John, took the patrimony of Mid Toftcombs, and, marrying, received with his wife, Christian Taverner, a dowry amounting to seven thousand merks — a not inconsiderable sum at that period. The fourth son of this marriage was Thomas Gladstone—grandfather of the statesman—who was born at Mid Toftcombs on the 3rd of June, 1732, and lived until the year of William Ewart Gladstone's birth; dying at the ripe age of seventy-seven. Thomas Gladstone, having early left the parental roof, became a corn-merchant in Leith, and married Helen, the daughter of Walter Neilson, of Springfield. Their union was very prolific, and of sixteen children born to them, no fewer than twelve grew up to maturity. Thomas Gladstone's aptitude for business was so great, and he was so enterprising, that -notwithstanding the numerous claims upon him-he was able to make some provision for all his sons in the adoption of their various trades or callings.

John Gladstone, the eldest son, was born at Leith, in the year 1763. He entered his father's business, and on attaining his majority an incident occurred which proved the turning-point in his career. Being commissioned by his father to go to Liverpool, in order to sell a cargo of grain which had arrived at that port, his demeanour and business capabilities so won upon the mind of one of the leading Liverpool cornmerchants, Mr. Corrie, that he desired his father to allow young Gladstone to settle at that port. For some time, accordingly, John Gladstone became assistant in the house of Corrie and Co. He was not long here, however, before his tact and shrewdness manifested themselves, and, by-and-by, the firm of Corrie

and Co. became transformed into that of Corrie, Gladstone. and Bradshaw. An anecdote is related which illustrates not only the harassing nature of the crises through which merchants in English ports are sometimes called upon to pass, but also the prudence and determination by which such crises are frequently met. To the conduct of John Gladstone was due, upon one occasion, the preservation and safety of the firm of which he was soon the most prominent member. The utter failure of the European corn-crops was regarded as an excellent opportunity for doing a great stroke of business by Mr. Corrie, who sent Mr. Gladstone to the United States to buy grain. But America, too, had suffered in her crops, and no corn was to be had. While in a condition of great perplexity, Mr. Gladstone received advices from Liverpool to the effect that twenty-four vessels had been engaged to convey to Europe the grain he was despatched to purchase, but which he had not been successful in procuring. The disastrous news soon became known that there were no cargoes of grain, and that the vessels, instead of being filled with a rich freight, must return to Liverpool in ballast only. The prospect was ruinous, and the stability of the house of Corrie and Co. was considered irretrievably shattered. But Liverpool merchants had reckoned without their host. Now was the time for John Gladstone to demonstrate his business capacity and enterprise, by which he was able to save the fortunes of the firm. While many would have been helplessly casting about for means of recovery, young Gladstone was up and doing. The ships must not return empty. He made a thorough examination of the American markets, ascertained what stocks there were which would be likely to prove acceptable in Liverpool, and, by dint of sleepless energy and activity, he managed to stock the holds of all the vessels. The result was that the house was saved at a very trifling loss. For many years after this the name of John Gladstone was a synonym for push and integrity, first on the Liverpool Exchange, and subsequently in other large towns, as well as in the metropolis.

The partnership of Corrie, Gladstone, and Bradshaw existed for some sixteen years, and during a portion of this period the firm acted as the Government agents at Liverpool. Upon the dissolution of the concern Gladstone was the only one who remained in business, and he took into partnership his brother Robert. operations became very extensive, and besides opening up a large trade with Russia, they had large connections as West India merchants and sugar importers. Mr. Gladstone afterwards became chairman of the West India Association, and took great interest in the proposals for increasing the dock accommodation of Liver-In course of time all the seven sons of Thomas Gladstone of Leith had settled down in Liverpool. The capacity to look ahead has been one of the principal traits of the Gladstones as merchants, and when the East India and China trades were thrown open beyond the old limits of the East India Company's monopoly, in 1814, the Liverpool firm of John Gladstone and Co. was the first to despatch a private vessel to Calcutta.

The first ten years of the present century formed a period of great trial and depression for Liverpool, and, indeed, for every important port of the United Kingdom. In the year 1806, Napoleon, anxious to cripple England, issued a decree declaring all the ports of Great Britain in a state of blockade, and prohibiting the importation into any port under his control of the productions of either Great Britain or her colonies. Alarmed by this bold decree, the British Government replied by issuing orders declaring all the ports, either of France or her allies, or from which the British flag was excluded, in a state of actual blockade, and condemning all vessels trading to them as good and lawful prize—unless they had previously touched at a British port, and paid customs duties to the British Crown. Napoleon retorted, in his Milan decree, by declaring any neutral vessel which had paid tax to the British Government denationalised. The result of this policy of mutual recrimination was most disastrous, especially as affecting English trade with America. Indeed, the posture of affairs is perhaps unexampled in modern warfare. The decrees of the British Government were much more objectionable and embarrassing to the Americans than those of Napoleon, which were practically inoperative. England enjoyed the empire of the sea, while Napoleon had little or no power to carry his edicts into execution. Diplomacy set to work, but the breach between the United States and England

could not be healed. These disputes with America, combined with the harassed condition of the commercial relations between the two countries, led to great popular discontent in 1807. As one effect of the policy of the British Government, it may be stated that in the course of twelve months the commerce of Liverpool declined to the amount of 140,000 tons, nearly one-fourth of the entire trade; and there was a decrease of no less than £22,000 in the dock dues. Liverpool merchants trading with America of course felt the strain severely, and John Gladstone was amongst those who signed a requisition demanding a public meeting for the purpose of petitioning Parliament against the Orders in Council. Liverpool was divided in opinion, but a petition was presented to the House of Commons, emanating from the town, and praying for a conciliatory policy towards hostile and neutral states, and especially in reference to the United States of America. In the year 1812—that is, after trade had been seriously crippled, and we had been precipitated into a war with America—the obnoxious orders were rescinded, on the advice of Lord Castlereagh.

Mr. John Gladstone's earnestness was conspicuous in everything he undertook. He was an ardent and yet practical politician. At first a professor of Whig principles, he subsequently modified his views, and became an energetic supporter of Mr. Canning. His principles later in life were those which we usually associate with the name of Liberal-Conservative. He presided over a meeting called in Liverpool in 1812 for

the purpose of inviting Canning to become a candidate for the borough. The election which ensued was a most exciting one, and is amongst the most remarkable of political contests ever held out of the metropolis. William Roscoe having retired from the representation, in October Canning signified his willingness to stand. At an open-air meeting held in Castle Street, Mr. Gladstone delivered an address, in the course of which he reviewed the commercial state of the country, and described in the most flattering and glowing terms Canning's public and private character. Mr. Gladstone agreed to support Henry Brougham as the colleague of Canning, and was most anxious for the return of these celebrated men. The other candidates were General Gascoyne—who belonged to a family of large property near the town —and a Mr. Creevey, a Radical of an advanced type. Unfortunately, by one of those fits of perversity which sometimes characterised Brougham, the great advocate threw in his lot with Creevey. In Brougham's Memoirs it is naïvely recorded in connection with this election, that 'two or three men were killed, but the town was quiet'—a striking commentary upon the general character of the elections of the period. The alliance between Brougham and Creevey threw Mr. Gladstone into the arms of the acknowledged Conservatives, and he now supported Canning and Gascoyne. Brougham and Creevey were defeated. After the election the successful candidates were chaired, and carried in procession through the streets. The procession finally halted at Mr. Gladstone's house, in Rodney Street, from the balcony of which Mr. Canning addressed the populace. This election laid the foundation of a deep and lasting friendship between Mr. Canning and Mr. Gladstone. At this time the son of the latter was but three years of age. Shortly afterwards, that is, as soon as he was able to understand anything of public men, and public movements and events, the name of Canning began to exercise that strange fascination over the mind of William Ewart Gladstone which has never wholly passed away.

In all the affairs of Liverpool Mr. John Gladstone took a warm interest, and to his efforts much of its increased prosperity was due. His public appearances were numerous, but with municipal matters he persistently declined to meddle, as he was a strong opponent of the self-elected municipal corporation of the ante-Reform Bill times. Whenever any movement, however, for the good of the town required his support, it was always ungrudgingly given. On the 28th of April, 1818, he addressed a meeting called 'to consider the propriety of petitioning Parliament to take into consideration the progressive and alarming increase in the crimes of forging and uttering forged Bank of England notes.' Although the punishments inflicted for these crimes were so heavy, they spread at an enormous The Liverpool meeting passed resolutions recommending the revision and amendment of the Criminal Law. So late as the year 1823 the navigation between Liverpool and Dublin was in a lamentable condition. Human life was recklessly imperilled, and

no one seemed willing to intervene. One example illustrating the dangers which vessels ran may be cited. A sloop, the Alert, was wrecked off the Welsh coast. She had on board between 100 and 140 souls, of whom only seventeen were saved. For the rescue of every person on board the public packet-boat, there only existed one small shallop twelve feet long. Mr. Gladstone—impressed with the terrible nature of the existing evil obtained the introduction into the Steamboat Act of an imperative provision requiring a sufficient number of boats for the total number of passengers every vessel was licensed to carry. By this humane provision thousands of lives were doubtless saved which would otherwise have been lost, the victims of reckless seamanship. Mr. Gladstone was also a warm advocate of Greek independence. On the 14th of February, 1824, a public meeting was held in the Liverpool Town Hall, 'for the purpose of considering the best means of assisting the Greeks in their present important struggle for independence.' Mr. Gladstone spoke impressively in favour of that cause which had already evoked great enthusiasm amongst the people, and enlisted the sympathies and support of Lord Byron and other distinguished friends of freedom.

In August, 1822, Mr. Gladstone presided at a fare-well dinner given to Mr. Canning by the Liverpool Canning Club. Mr. Canning had been selected by the East India Company for the appointment of Governor-General of India. After the dinner an address was presented to the distinguished statesman at Mr. Glad-

stone's house. But although Canning retired from the representation of Liverpool, he did not leave the country. In consequence of the death of the Marquis of Londonderry by his own hand, the right hon. gentleman was invited to take office under the Crown. On this accession of Mr. Canning to office in 1827 a crowded meeting of his former constituents was held to celebrate the event. Mr. John Gladstone moved an address to his Majesty, congratulating the Sovereign upon the formation of the Canning Ministry.

On the Reform question Mr. Gladstone held peculiar views. While not opposed to a greater enfranchisement of the people, he desired to see any measure of reform which should be introduced take the shape which should best consult all interests. He was the principal speaker at a meeting called in November, 1831, to discuss this subject. He made no scruple in expressing his views that he considered the projected reform was going too far; that due regard was not paid to the influence of property; and he maintained that the qualifications for the franchise ought to differ in differing circumstances.

That such a man should make a mark in the town in which a great portion of his life was spent is but natural. Mr. John Gladstone was esteemed by his fellow-townsmen, irrespective of class and of political opinion. The spirit of the man impressed itself upon all with whom he came into contact. His energy, his conscientiousness, and his philanthropic efforts in a variety of directions, all tended to endow him with

great popularity. The high position he held in the public esteem was abundantly manifested by certain very interesting proceedings which took place in Liverpool on the 18th of October, 1824. On this day, Mr. Gladstone was presented with a magnificent service of plate, consisting of twenty-eight pieces, and bearing the following inscription:—'To John Gladstone, Esq., M.P., this service of plate was presented MDCCCXXIV. by his fellow-townsmen and friends, to mark their high sense of his successful exertions for the promotion of Trade and Commerce, and in acknowledgment of his most important services rendered to the town of Liverpool.'\*

Whether mingling in the strife of politics had excited in Mr. John Gladstone an ambition for parliamentary life, or whether it was due to the influence of Mr. Canning—who early perceived the many sterling qualities of his influential supporter—matters little, but he at length came forward for Woodstock, a pocket borough of the Marlborough family. After having sat for this borough, he represented Lancaster and other constituencies, being, altogether, a member of the House of Commons for nine years. He was in the House at the same time as his son, and listened to many of his earlier efforts in parliamentary oratory. Mr. John Gladstone never offered himself for Liverpool, although he possessed great influence in the borough. This was

<sup>\*</sup> For some of these details respecting Sir John Gladstone, the author is indebted to Mr. J. A. Picton's very interesting Memorials of Liverpool.

as Liverpool had special claims upon its members, and demanded from them more important services in the House of Commons than he could render. Sir Robert Peel created Mr. John Gladstone a baronet in 1845. He lived to enjoy his justly-acquired honours for a short time only, dying in 1851 at the patriarchal age of eighty-eight.

Sir John Gladstone was not devoid of literary talent. When the Slavery question came to the front, he entered into a correspondence upon the subject with Mr. John Cropper, and wrote a pamphlet 'On the Present State of Slavery in the British West Indies and in the United States of America; and on the Importation of Sugar from the British Settlements in India.' In the year 1830 he published 'A Statement of Facts connected with the Present State of Slavery in the British Sugar and Coffee Colonies, and in the United States of America; together with a View of the Situation of the Lower Classes in the United Kingdom: in a Letter addressed to Sir Robert Peel.' He also wrote and issued in 1846 a pamphlet entitled 'Plain Facts intimately connected with the intended Repeal of the Corn Laws; or, Probable Effects on the Public Revenue and the Prosperity of this Country.'

On both sides the subject of our biography is of Scotch descent. He alluded to this fact in mature life, and when receiving an address in November, 1865, from the Parliamentary Reform Union, in the Glasgow Trades Hall. He thanked those who had

signed the address for reminding him of his connection with Scotland at large, and of Glasgow, through the county of Lanark. 'If Scotland is not ashamed of her sons,' he said, 'her sons are not ashamed of Scotland; and the memory of the parents to whom I owe my being combines with various other considerations to make me glad and thankful to remember that the blood which runs in my veins is exclusively Scottish.' Sir John Gladstone—who had no issue by his first marriage—married as his second wife Ann Robertson, daughter of Mr. Andrew Robertson, of Stornoway, and sometime Provost of Dingwall. She has been described by one who knew her intimately as 'a lady of very great accomplishments; of fascinating manners, of commanding presence and high intellect; one to grace any home and endear any heart.' children were six in number—four sons and two daughters. Of the sons two only survive, viz., Sir Thomas Gladstone, Bart., of Fasque, and William Ewart Gladstone. Captain John Neilson Gladstone, sometime M.P. for Portarlington, died in 1863, and Mr. Robertson Gladstone, a prominent merchant and citizen of Liverpool, died in 1875. Of the daughters, one, Anne McKenzie, died unmarried, and Miss Helen Jane Gladstone still survives. The enormous wealth of Sir John Gladstone enabled him to make handsome provision for each of his children during his lifetimea fortunate circumstance for the future statesman, and one which left him at liberty to devote his energies to the public service, undistracted by the necessity for

business or professional occupation. The Gladstone family belongs, as we have said, essentially to the middle class—and Mr. Gladstone himself would claim for it no other honour—but the zealous Burke connects the marriage of Sir John Gladstone with Miss Robertson to a royal descent from Henry III. of England, and Robert Bruce, King of Scotland. This alleged illustrious pedigree is thus traced—Lady Jane Beaufort, who was a descendant of Henry III., married James I. of Scotland, who was a descendant of Bruce. From this alliance it is said that the steps can be followed clearly down to the father of Miss Robertson. A Scotch writer upon genealogy, also referring to this matter, states that Mr. Gladstone is descended on the mother's side from the ancient Mackenzie of Kintail, through whom is introduced the blood of the Bruce, of the ancient Kings of Man, and of the Lords of the Isles and Earls of Ross; also from the Munros of Fowlis, and the Robertsons of Strowan and Athole. What was of more consequence to the Gladstones of recent generations, however, than royal blood, was the fact that by their own energy and honourable enterprise they carved their own fortunes, and rose to positions of public esteem and eminence.

England was distracted by troubles at home and abroad when he who was to be the greatest Liberal statesman of his time first saw the light at Liverpool, on the 29th of December, 1809. Commerce was paralysed in many of its centres; men had not forgotten the horrors of the French Revolution; and Napoleon

still bestrode Europe like a Colossus. The time was one to make all men pause, and there is scarcely room. for wonder that men of property, merchants, and others, who had never hitherto been suspected of Tory proclivities, should acquire a strong Conservative bias. Probably this had something to do with the gravitation of Mr. John Gladstone towards the principles of Mr. Canning. At any rate, in following the public career of his son, these influences must not be lost sight of. His politics and his strength of will he imbibed from his father; his sensitiveness, and his power of receiving, and susceptibility to, impressions were doubtless acquired from his mother, Ann Robert-Having his father for his teacher, and being constantly reminded of, and indoctrinated in, the principles of Canning, it is not surprising that Mr. Gladstone began life as a Tory.

There has rarely, if ever, been witnessed in statesmanship so singular a combination of qualities and faculties. Without being possessed of that highest of all gifts, an absolutely informing genius, he has, perhaps, every endowment save that. Liverpool gave him his financial talent and business aptitude, Eton his classical attainments, Oxford his moral fervour and religious spirit. He has thrown round the science of finance a halo with which it seemed impossible to invest it; and he has diffused a light upon all great questions in which he has become interested, which has revealed them to, and brought them clearly within, the popular apprehension and understanding. Into every work that he

has undertaken, he has imported an earnestness described as enthusiasm by his friends and fanaticism by his opponents. Neither the world of commerce, the world of politics, nor the world of letters has held him entirely for its own; yet he has trodden every stage with success. As a recent writer\* well observes, 'He cares even more than trades-unions for the welfare of the working men; more than the manufacturers for the interests of capital; more for the cause of retrenchment than the most jealous and avowed foes of Government expenditure; more for the spread of education than the advocates of a compulsory national system; more for careful constitutional precedent than the Whigs; and more for the spiritual independence of the Church than the highest Tories. He unites cotton with culture, Manchester with Oxford, the deep classical joy over the Italian resurrection and Greek independence with the deep English interest on the amount of the duty on Zante raisins and Italian rags. The great railway boards and the bishops are about equally interested in Mr. Gladstone.' And again, from the intellectual point of view, 'Mr. Gladstone's mind mediates between the moral and material interests of the age, and rests in neither. He moralises finance and commerce, and (if we may be allowed the barbarism) institutionalises ethics and faith.'

The acts and speeches of such a man are his best biography. It is through these that we shall trace his career. Differing largely as he does from all other

<sup>\*</sup> Sketches in Parliament, by R. H. Hutton.

public men, he must be his own interpreter. We do not approach the subject from the merely apologetic or panegyrical point of view; our purpose is to narrate the life of Mr. Gladstone, and to pass in review his literary and political labours. From the youthful politician of 1832 to the statesman of 1870 there are many startling changes and revolutions of thought; but it may not be impossible to trace in these a natural sequence. He who began public life as 'the rising hope of the stern and unbending Tories,' in course of time became the most popular leader of the Liberal party. Every vaticination made in his youth he has defeated, while to many of the most daring hopes of Liberal politicians he has given a complete and a splendid realisation. From every standpoint his extraordinary career is worthy of study; it possesses passages of enduring interest, alike for those who are most strongly in political antagonism with him as for those who are his most fervent supporters.

### CHAPTER II.

#### AT ETON AND OXFORD.

Mr. Gladstone entered at Eton—Character of the School Fifty Years ago—Education and Discipline—Eton described by Etonians—Periodicals established by Distinguished Students—Mr. Gladstone's Contributions to the *Eton Miscellany*—Eulogy of Canning—He leaves Eton in 1827—Private Tuition—Becomes a Student of Christ Church, Oxford—Character of the University—High Church and Conservative Proclivities—Life and Study at Oxford—The Union Debating Society—Memorable Debates—Presidents of the Society—Effect upon Mr. Gladstone of his Oxford Training—Close of his University Career—Continental Travels—Ascent of Mount Etna—Extracts from Mr. Gladstone's Diary—Graphic Description of an Eruption.

Mr. John Gladstone—who early discovered the keen intellectual powers of his son—wisely determined upon sending him to Eton. Immersed in the cares of business, and with numberless claims upon him of a public and private nature, he found himself unable longer to direct the developing faculties of the youth who already gave promise of distinction. He likewise probably felt that even where it is feasible, it is yet not advisable for parents to take entire charge of the education of their children. They can never impart to them that most valuable of all knowledge—experience, which is gained by mingling with the world alone. Private tuition also necessarily fails in this respect, else had Mr. Gladstone all that could be desired in his early years. The Ven. Archdeacon Jones, his earliest pre-

ceptor, was a man of the most solid acquirements and sterling uprightness of character; but, whether in youth or manhood, it is contact with others that best stimulates the mind and urges it to the full and free exercise of its powers. It is said that when his son was but twelve years of age. Mr. Gladstone would discuss with him the public questions of the day, teaching him to think for himself, and to examine well the bases of the opinions which he might have formed upon political and other subjects. Precocity is not always the happiest augury in a youth; it too frequently betokens one of two things—either that the flame of genius which burns so brightly will be quickly extinguished for the lack of physical fuel, or that the quickness and intelligence of childhood will degenerate into mediocrity as manhood approaches. Mr. Gladstone was an exception to this rule, in so far as that solidity of judgment appears to have accompanied perceptive and retentive powers of an unusual order. His genius was not of the purely conceptive and imaginative type, but he possessed an intellectual aptitude of a high order, and was favoured in addition with an exceptional amount of vital energy.

He was entered at Eton in September, 1821, and left there in 1827. This celebrated foundation has recently been the subject of many virulent attacks, and it must be admitted that, in proportion to other schools, there are comparatively few Eton boys who go to the universities. The system of education and discipline pursued has undergone some modifications in recent

years—notably during the provostship of the Rev. Francis Hodgson—but radical defects are still alleged against it. It is not a little remarkable, however, that every Eton boy becomes deeply attached to the school, notwithstanding the apprenticeship to hardships he may have been compelled to undergo. In order to afford a view of the inner workings of Eton, we will reproduce the chief points of an indictment framed against it, shortly after young Gladstone left its timehonoured precincts.\* Eton College is divided into two schools, the upper and lower. The former consists of four classes, viz., the 6th and 5th forms, the remove. and the 4th form. But there is another distinction besides that of schools. Seventy King's scholars, or collegers, are maintained on the foundation gratuitously, and sleep in the college. They are also distinguished in their dress from the great majority of Eton boys, who are called oppidans. These live in the town, and a feeling of hostility has always prevailed between the two classes. King's College at Cambridge having been founded in connection with Eton, to receive as fellows the students upon the foundation—as vacancies occur at King's College, the King's scholars at nominated to them according to seniority. The evil here is apparent—long residence and not merit determines the nomination to the fellowships. scholars, who may have been backward at Eton, have

<sup>\*</sup>The following facts, together with others not so material, were stated in an article published in the Edinburgh Review for April, 1830, and entitled 'Public Schools of England—Eton.'

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army near Syracuse, mixed up with a recollection of the deaths of Cyrus and Socrates, some moral precepts of Isocrates, and some jokes against false philosophers and heathen gods.' With this kind of preparation, the Etonian who goes to Cambridge or Oxford finds he has nothing but a little desultory reading, and that he must begin again. But the same writer who lays this gravamen, not only complains that the Eton system of education fails in every point—he calls in question the moral discipline of the school. The number of scholars is so great that proper supervision cannot be given to them; hence there is laxity as regards the older boys, while the smaller and weaker are exposed, without hope of redress, to the tyranny of their superiors in years and strength. The system of fagging is the result. 'The right of fagging depends upon the place in the school; all boys in the sixth and fifth forms have the power of ordering—all below the latter form are bound to obey.' In 1820—the year before Mr. Gladstone entered—there were at Eton 280 upper boys, and 248 lower—total, 528; the year after he left there were 293 upper boys, and 319 lower—total, 612. The system of fagging has a very injurious effect upon many boys; it finds them slaves and leaves them despots. A boy who has suffered himself, insensibly learns to see no harm in making others suffer in their turn. whole thing is wrong in principle, and engenders passions which should be stifled, and not encouraged. The punishments of Eton are, moreover, objected tothat of flogging (performed by the Head Master) being especially degrading in its results. For the first two or three times a boy feels the shame attaching to this kind of punishment, but he soon becomes callous, and the flogging has no effect, save a pernicious one upon the minds of others.

So much for the Eton of Mr. Gladstone's period. But the account differs little from that given by one who attended the school twenty years later.\* He does not complain much of the course of instruction until the boys reached the fifth form, but then began 'some of the greatest anomalies and absurdities of the then existing Etonian system.' He was now safe from any examination ordeal; and the confession is made that the highest form—the sixth—consisting of the ten senior collegers and ten senior oppidans-included some of the very worst scholars of both orders in its bosom. 'A boy's place on the general roll was no more a criterion of his acquirements and industry than would be the "year" of a young man at Oxford or Cambridge.' One reform has been instituted, however, in connection with the collegers, or boys upon the foundation, viz., they are required to pass some kind of examination in accordance with which their seniority on the list for King's is fixed. With regard to the hours of study, nevertheless, at this later period, in consequence of the regular holidays and saints' days, two whole holidays in a week and two half-holidays

<sup>\*</sup>We now quote from an article by Mr. John Delaware Lewis, 'Eton Thirty Years Since,' which appeared in *Macmillan's Magazine* for May, 1875.

were a matter of common occurrence. Not only as regards time, but looking at the nature of the studies themselves, it appears almost to have been a system of playing at school. In 1845 the time devoted to study did not amount to eleven hours per week. The same writer—an old Etonian—thus speaks of the nature of the studies pursued:—

'The books used in the fifth form—besides the Iliad, the Æneid, Horace, and, I think, some scraps of Ovid for repetition merely—consisted of three "Selections," or "Readers"-Poetæ Græci, which contained some picked passages from Homer's Odyssey, Callimachus, Theocritus, &c.; together with Scriptores Græci and Scriptores Romani, which were similarly made up of tit-bits from the best Greek and Latin prose writers. A lad would go on grinding at the above scanty provender from the age it might be of twelve to that of twenty, with little or no change. Plautus, Terence, Lucretius, Persius, Juvenal, Livy, Tacitus, Cicero, Demosthenes, the tragedians (except in the Head Master's division), Aristophanes, Pindar, Herodotus, Thucydides—in short, all but four of the great authors of Greece and Rome, and those four poets, were entirely unknown to us, except it might be through the medium of certain fragments in the "Selections" aforesaid, where I believe that the majority of them were wholly unrepresented. It seems almost incredible that a young man could go up to the University from the upper fifth form of the first classical school in England, ignorant almost of the very names of these authors. Yet such was the case sometimes. It was very much my own case.'

Lord Morley, being examined before the Public Schools Commission, was asked whether a boy would be looked down upon at Eton for being industrious in school-work. His lordship replied, 'Not if he could do something else well.' In this answer breathes the spirit of the Eton boy, who has always been ready to condone lack of scholarship when his companion has excelled in river or field sports. Some curious stories are told of the flogging which has always been a character-

istic feature of Eton. It extended, as we have said, to even the biggest boys in the school. Mr. Lewis relates how a young man of twenty—just upon the point of leaving school, and engaged to be married to a young lady at Windsor—was well and soundly whipped by Dr. Goodford, for arriving one evening at his tutor's house beyond the specified time. Other anecdotes are told not a whit more creditable. Yet boys are greatly enamoured of the school, and the life of a 'big fellow' there has been described as the happiest in the world.

When all that is possible has been said against Eton—and we should remember that reforms are of slow growth—and whatever may be the precise character of the school now, it is undoubtedly true that many of the finest men of the century have been educated there. On the other hand, there is truth in the argument that most of these men would have distinguished themselves anywhere. They cannot, perhaps, be legitimately claimed as the product of Eton, though their development received an impetus there. The advantages derived from the school are social rather than scholastic. Whether it has fallen behind other schools, and deteriorated in this age of education, is another question. The reason, probably, why we do not hear so much of its successes is that other schools have recently come to the front. For a youth to whom time is not money, and who can afford to spend his teens in an agreeable if not the most profitable way, Eton is still one of the best schools to which he can be sent. Those who

have known the class of men produced at Eton will admit that they have generally been 'fine manly fellows, with an excellent tone.' The curriculum at Eton now is still strictly classical, though some secondary subjects are taught, as French, German, and mathematics. Of recent years the collegers have done remarkably good work, and carried off many distinctions at Cambridge.

In Mr. Gladstone's time, however, there were few inducements to excel in scholarship, and he who did so must not only have possessed the love of it, but must have applied himself diligently to study out of school hours. The annals of Eton furnish many illustrious examples of this kind, men distinguished for the depth and solidity of their attainments; and in this number must be included the subject of the present work. He had no prize at Eton, except what was called being sent up for good, on account of verses; and it fell to Mr. Gladstone's lot to be thus honoured on several occasions. At various periods within a century past the more intellectual of Eton boys have established periodicals for the purpose of ventilating their opinions. For example, in 1786, Mr. Canning and Mr. Hookham Frere projected the Microcosm, whose essays and jeux d'esprit, while referring primarily to Eton, demonstrated that the writers were not insensible to what was going on in the outer world. Canning wrote for this periodical an 'Essay on the Epic of the Queen of Hearts,' which has been awarded a high place in English literature as a classical

specimen of burlesque criticism. Amongst other contributors to the Microcosm were Lord Henry Spencer, Hookham Frere, Capel Lofft, and Mr. Mellish. It was just before this period that eighty boys were flogged at Eton for having been 'barred out,' amongst them being Mr. Arthur Wellesley, afterwards the Great Duke. Coming to a later period, W. Mackworth Praed set on foot, in the year 1820, a manuscript journal entitled Apis Matina. This was succeeded by the Etonian, which received some of Praed's most brilliant contributions. Amongst other writers may be named John Moultrie, Henry Nelson Coleridge, Walter Blunt, and Chauncey Hare Townshend. The Etonian exhibited a degree of quite exceptional excellence, and may even now be turned to with no ordinary feelings of interest.

Seven years later than the date of Praed's venture—that is, in 1827—Mr. Gladstone was mainly instrumental in launching the *Eton Miscellany*. The contributions extended over two volumes, dated June—July, and October—November respectively. The *Miscellany* professed to be edited by Bartholomew Bouverie, and Mr. Gladstone was its most voluminous contributor. Many of the papers are entertaining, as showing at the age of seventeen the literary bias of the writer. In the latter portion of the introduction, and that which was written by 'William Ewart Gladstone,' appears this singular paragraph, which (it may be assumed) fairly sets forth the hopes and fears that beset statesmen in maturer years, as well as Eton boys in their youth:—

'In my present undertaking there is one gulf in which I fear to sink, and that gulf is Lethe. There is one stream which I dread my inability to stem, it is the tide of Popular Opinion. I have ventured, and no doubt rashly ventured—

"Like little wanton boys that swim on bladders,
To try my fortune in a sea of glory,
But far beyond my depth."

At present it is hope alone that buoys me up; for more substantial support I must be indebted to my own exertions, well knowing that in this land of literature merit never wants its reward. That such merit is mine I dare not presume to think; but still there is something within me that bids me hope that I may be able to glide prosperously down the stream of public estimation; or, in the words of Virgil—

## "---Celerare viam rumore secundo."

Little could the writer of these words imagine—forecasting the future even by the aid of youth's most ardent desires—that he would live to fill the most exalted office it was in the power of his Sovereign to bestow.

Mr. Gladstone's contributions to the first volume of the Miscellany were thirteen in number; there were ten also by his friend G. A. (afterwards Bishop) Selwyn. We may pause here, for a moment, to quote from a tribute which Mr. Gladstone recently paid to his old college companion Selwyn—a passage interesting both for its references to Bishop Selwyn and to the Eton of Mr. Gladstone's time:—'Connected as tutor with families of rank and influence, universally popular from his frank, manly, and engaging character,—and scarcely less so from his extraordinary vigour as an athlete,—he was attached to Eton, where he resided, with a love surpassing the love of Etonians. In himself he formed a large part of the life of Eton, and Eton formed a

large part of his life. To him is due no small share of the beneficial movement in the direction of religious earnestness which marked the Eton of forty years back, and which was not in my opinion sensibly affected by any influence extraneous to the place itself. At a moment's notice, upon the call of duty, he tore up the singularly deep roots which his life had struck into the soil of England.' Both Gladstone and Selwyn contributed humorous letters to 'The Postman,' the correspondence department of the Eton Miscellany. Amongst Mr. Gladstone's effusions was a vigorous rendering of a chorus from the Hecuba of Euripides. Under the name of 'Philophantasm,' moreover, he wrote a letter detailing an encounter he had had with Virgil. This letter has considerable point, and no small share of sarcastic power. The great poet appeared to the writer, muttering something which the latter supposed to be Latin, 'but it certainly was very different in sound and quantities from that we work at here.' The poet proposed drastic remedies for curing the wrongs from which he suffered in the Upper World; and, presenting his compliments to Mr. Bouverie, asked to be quoted as well as Horace now and then. 'I know the Eton boys hate me,' added Virgil, 'because I am difficult to learn.'

Besides a humorous epilogue in quindecasyllabics, spoken by David ap Rice, which appeared in the fourth number of the *Miscellany*, Mr. Gladstone wrote in the same volume a 'View of Lethe,' in prose, and 'Richard

Cœur de Lion,' an effort in verse. This poem consists of some two hundred and fifty lines, and the following passage may be taken as a fair sample of the whole:—

'Who foremost now the deadly spear to dart, And strike the jav'lin to the Moslem's heart? Who foremost now to climb the leaguer'd wall, The first to triumph, or the first to fall? Lo, where the Moslems rushing to the fight, Back bear their squadrons in inglorious flight. With plumed helmet, and with glitt'ring lance, Tis Richard bids his steel-clad bands advance; Tis Richard stalks along the blood-dyed plain, And views unmoved the slaying and the slain; "Tis Richard bathes his hands in Moslem blood, And tinges Jordan with the purple flood. Yet where the timbrels ring, the trumpets sound, And tramp of horsemen shakes the solid ground, Though 'mid the deadly charge and rush of fight, No thought be theirs of terror or of flight,— Ofttimes a sigh will rise, a tear will flow, And youthful bosoms melt in silent woe; For who of iron frame and harder heart Can bid the mem'ry of his home depart? Tread the dark desert and the thirsty sand, Nor give one thought to England's smiling land? To scenes of bliss, and days of other years— The Vale of Gladness, and the Vale of Tears; That, pass'd and vanish'd from their loving sight, This 'neath their view, and wrapt in shades of night?'

F. H. (now Sir Francis Hastings) Doyle and Arthur Henry Hallam contributed somewhat extensively to the volume from which we have just been quoting. In the 'View of Lethe,' a contribution by Mr. Gladstone to which reference has already been made, the writer describes the destruction which overtakes

mundane things with a strong touch of humour. Here is a short extract from the essay:—

'I was surprised even to see some works with the names of Shakespeare and Milton on them sharing the common destiny; but on examination I found that those of the latter were some political rhapsodies which richly deserved their fate; and that the former consisted of some editions of his works which had been burdened with notes and mangled with emendations by his merciless commentators. In other places I perceived authors worked up into frenzy by seeing their own compositions descending like the rest. Often did the infuriated scribes extend their hands, and make a plunge to endeavour to save their beloved offspring, but in vain. I pitied the anguish of their disappointment, but with feelings of the same commiseration as that which one feels for a malefactor on beholding his death, being at the same time fully conscious how well he has deserved it.'

Novels were engulfed, we are told, and an immense number of political pamphlets, a very prolific form of literature from 1820 to 1832; newspapers in abundance were also buried in oblivion; and even as they went down they were seen to be in mortal combat with each other.

To the second volume of the Eton Miscellany 'William Ewart Gladstone' contributed even more largely than to the first. In fact, his devotion to letters during the last year of his stay at Eton must have left him little leisure for the ordinary sports of Eton boys. Besides the introductions to the various numbers comprising the second volume, Mr. Gladstone wrote no fewer than seventeen other contributions. 'Guatimozin's Death Song' has something in it to remind one of Byron. There is also an 'Ode to the Shade of Wat Tyler,' which may be read with curio-

sity. In the same volume Arthur Henry Hallam wrote 'The Battle of the Boyne,' a parody upon Campbell's 'Hohenlinden.' Among other contributors were Doyle, Jelf, Selwyn, and Shadwell. A paper on 'Eloquence,' written by Mr. Gladstone, shows how, even at this early period, the mind of the young student had been impressed by the fame attaching to successful parliamentary oratory. He proceeds to show how the vision of the most ardent and aspiring minds is usually directed towards St. Stephen's. Visions of joy and honour open on the enraptured sight of those given to oratorical pursuits, and whose minds are directed to the House of Commons. 'A successful début, an offer from the Minister, a Secretaryship of State, and even the Premiership itself, are the objects which form the vista along which a young visionary loves to look.' But then, he reminds his readers, there is a barrier to pass, an ordeal to endure. There are roars of coughing, as well as roars of cheering; and maiden speeches sometimes act more forcibly on the lungs of hearers than the most violent or most cutting of all the breezes which Æolus can boast. But the writer draws encouragement from the fact that among the most distinguished young speakers in the House of Commons at that very time were Lord Morpeth, Mr. Edward Geoffrey Stanley, and Lord Castlereagh, all of whom were once members of the Eton College Debating Within a very few years from penning these lines the writer himself had successfully passed the parliamentary ordeal so much dreaded, and had been invited to fill an honourable post in the Ministry of the day.

Mr. Gladstone's high admiration for, and indebtedness to, Canning have been subject of frequent comment, and it will not be without interest that we quote a passage illustrating this from a paper entitled 'Ancient and Modern Genius compared,' written by the younger Etonian. It is, perhaps, the most meritorious of all its writer's youthful productions. After taking the part of the moderns as against the ancients—though he by no means depreciates the genius of the latter—the essayist, in concluding his paper, thus eloquently apostrophises Canning:—

'It is for those who revered him in the plenitude of his meridian glory to mourn over him in the darkness of his premature extinction: to mourn over the hopes that are buried in his grave, and the evils that arise from his withdrawing from the scene of life. Surely if eloquence never excelled and seldom equalled—if an expanded mind and judgment whose vigour was paralleled only by its soundness—if brilliant wit—if a glowing imagination—if a warm heart, and an unbending firmness—could have strengthened the frail tenure, and prolonged the momentary duration of human existence, that man had been immortal! But nature could endure no longer. Thus has Providence ordained that inasmuch as the intellect is more brilliant, it shall be more short-lived; as its sphere is more expanded, more swiftly is it summoned away. Lest we should give to man the honour due to God—lest we should exalt the object of our admiration into a divinity for our worship—He who calls the weary and the mourner to eternal rest, hath been pleased to remove him from our eyes.'

Then, after comparing the death of the object of his early hero-worship with the death of Pitt, he says, finally, 'The decrees of inscrutable Wisdom are unknown to us; but if ever there was a man for whose sake it was meet to indulge the kindly though frail feelings of our

nature—for whom the tear of sorrow was to us both prompted by affection, and dictated by duty—that man was George Canning.'

Leaving Eton in 1827—having established a reputation amongst his contemporaries for erudition and ability—Mr. Gladstone became the private pupil of Dr. Turner, afterwards Bishop of Calcutta. Two years later he went to Christ Church, Oxford, where he was made a student on the foundation. In the year 1831 he went up for his examination, and completed his academical education by attaining the highest honours of the University—graduating double first-class. had no prizes at Oxford of the highest description, unless honours in the schools be so called—and in this respect he achieved a success which falls to the lot of but few students. The University life in which he now mingled was well calculated to foster and strengthen those Conservative principles to whose early manifestation allusion has already been made. Those who regard Mr. Gladstone's career from a Liberal standpoint may naturally urge that his life at Oxford had the effect of retarding for many years his political development. It would be curious to speculate upon the nature of the result had the distinguished young student been thrown into a totally different atmosphere. When we endeavour to trace the progress of Mr. Gladstone's political convictions, it is necessary to remember that, while early battling with Liberal tendencies, every single influence which surrounded him exercised a restraining effect in the opposite direction.

Moreover, the time at which he went to Oxford was one in which party feeling raged fiercely. Conservatives had deliberately come to the conclusion that unless they banded themselves together for the safety of the country, the country would inevitably be ruined. Events in France had reacted injuriously upon politics in England. Timid politicians became alarmed at the ventilation of Liberal opinions, and many of these opinions were viewed with feelings akin to horror. In Oxford this reactionary sentiment focussed itself, as it were, and Mr. Gladstone was amongst those who, for a time, opposed with genuine earnestness the demands for Reform. Our statesmen had not, as yet, acquired that confidence in the people which subsequently grew with surprising rapidity. Canning, too, had some years before given an impetus to this feeling of apprehension and distrust, by expressing his fear lest the country should become swayed by the popular will. In the record of the debates of the Oxford Union, as we shall presently see, the name of William Ewart Gladstone is found among the opponents of the Reform projects of the day; but the speaker himself, accounting for this at a later stage of his history, explained that, being as a young man an ardent admirer of Canning, he had been carried away by his well-known hostility to Reform.

A glimpse of life and study at Oxford is afforded by one who was cotemporary there with Mr. Gladstone.\* He points out how that in the University a

<sup>\*</sup> We quote from an article in the Oxford University Magazine for 1834.

greater stress was laid upon a knowledge of the Bible and of the evidences of Christianity than upon classical literature; some proficiency was required also either in mathematics or the science of reasoning. While the system of education in vogue accommodated itself to the wants and capacities of the greater number of students, the man of talent was at no loss for a field for his exertions, or a reward for his industry. The honours of the University were all before him. For the cultivation of taste and general information Oxford afforded every advantage, though it was matter for regret that amongst all its teachers there was no public professor of modern languages.

Describing Christ Church—then, as now, the most aristocratic of the colleges—the same writer observed that there was no other college where a man had so great a choice of society, or a more entire freedom in choosing it. It was nowhere so easy to observe others and live quite independently of them, without the certainty of being observed in return. Touching the Debating Society, or the Oxford Union, we read, 'We could hardly name any institution in Oxford which has been more useful in encouraging a taste for study and for general reading than this juvenile club. It has not only supplied a school for speaking for those who intend to pursue the professions of the Law and the Church, or to embrace political life; but by furnishing a theatre for the display of miscellaneous knowledge, and by bringing together most of the distinguished young men in the University, it has had a great effect upon the

general tone of society.' Debates were held once a week, and there were provided in connection with the Union a respectable library and a well-furnished reading-It was also claimed that in this Society the undergraduate might learn for the first time to think upon political subjects, and could improve his acquaintance with modern history—especially that of his own country. The sharp encounter of rival wits was useful in expanding the mind, and in enlarging the scope of its impressions. Further, it was remarked that unless a student was so perverse as to set himself entirely against the prevailing tone of feeling which pervaded all classes in Oxford, he would probably acquire from conviction, as well as prejudice, a spirit of devoted loyalty, of warm attachment to the liberties and ancient institutions of his country, a dislike and dread of rash innovation, and an admiration approaching to reverence for the orthodox and apostolic English Church. All this 'leads by an easy and natural step to serious meditation upon the vital matter of religion, and this contributes more than anything to strengthen the good resolutions, and to settle the character, of a high-minded young man. He becomes distinguished for polish of manners, steadiness of morals, and strictness of reading.' The opponents of Oxford culture affirmed, on the other hand, that its tendency was towards intolerance and bigotry, both in religion and politics. Mr. Gladstone cast in his lot for the time with the Tories and the High Churchmen. excellent observation has been made by a living writer on the religious aspect of Mr. Gladstone's nature as developed at Oxford. He notes how the Oxford of his University life—the Oxford before 'the movement of 1833'—the 'Oxford which made the Aristotelian dogma that virtue is the half-way house between two opposite vices its ethical rule, and which took the Church as it was as the true starting-point in religion—the Oxford which had not yet begun to dig after the roots of principle—tended to turn Mr. Gladstone's acutely discriminating powers towards consequences rather than first principles.' It was not until after the lapse of a generation that the Christ Church student was to demonstrate that he could regard Church questions from a broad, comprehensive, and fundamental point of view.

The Oxford Union has lately had a chronicler who speaks with authority upon the brilliant debates of that Society.\* The Union came into existence in the spring of 1823, and fifty years later it celebrated its jubilee by a banquet, at which Lord Selborne took the chair. It is not a little remarkable that Mr. Gladstone's Ministry included no fewer than seven of the early presidents of the society, viz., the ex-Premier himself, Lord Selborne, Mr. Lowe, Mr. Cardwell, the Attorney-General, Mr. Goschen, and Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen. Although the Union owed its origin to a few Balliol men, three-fifths of the members of the United Debating Society came from Christ Church and Oriel. The Wilberforces attained great distinction in the society. In the latter

<sup>\*</sup> Mr. E. B. Nicholson, late Librarian to the Union, from whose paper on the subject the author has extracted information upon the Society.

part of 1825 the United Debating Society, as such, was dissolved, and the members reorganised themselves—'leaving out their black sheep'—as the Oxford Union Society, thus imitating the name of the older society in connection with Cambridge University. In the matter of a library the members appear to have been very eclectic, for Mr. Nicholson states that up to the year 1836 proposals to buy the Waverley Novels and other works of fiction were thrown out.

From 1829 to 1834 is described as the most active and most brilliant period in the history of the Union. In the course of these five years the presidency was held by (amongst others) Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Sidney Herbert, the Duke of Newcastle, Lord Selborne, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and Mr. Lowe. Mr. Gladstone made his first speech on the 11th of February, 1830, and was the same night elected a member of the The following year he succeeded Mr. committee. Milnes Gaskell in the office of secretary. 'His minutes are neat; proper names are underlined and half printed. As secretary he opposed a motion for the removal of Jewish disabilities. He also moved that the Wellington Administration was undeserving of the country's confidence: Gaskell, Lyall, and Lord Lincoln supported; Sidney Herbert and the Marquis (now Duke) of Abercorn opposed him. The motion was carried by 57 to 56, and the natural exultation of the mover betrayed itself in such irregular entries as "tremendous cheers," "repeated cheering." The following week he was elected president.' Mr. Gladstone spoke in three other

debates upon important public questions. In common with the Archbishop of Canterbury he defended the results of Catholic relief, and on the occasion of a vote of want of confidence in Earl Grey's Government being proposed, he moved the following rider:—'That the Ministry has unwisely introduced, and most unscrupulously forwarded, a measure which threatens not only to change our form of Government, but ultimately to break up the very foundations of social order, as well as materially to forward the views of those who are pursuing this project throughout the civilised world.' These terrible prognostications have been defeated, but the terror engendered in the University by national progress led 94 out of 130 undergraduates to endorse the prophecies of the new Cassandra. Mr. Gladstone closed his career at the Oxford Union by proposing an amendment to a motion for the immediate emancipation This was on the of our slaves in the West Indies. 2nd of June, 1831, and the young orator's amendment ran as follows:—'That legislative enactments ought to be made, and, if necessary, to be enforced—1st. For better guarding the personal and civil rights of the negroes in our West Indian colonies. 2nd. For establishing compulsory manumission. 3rd. For securing universally the receiving of a Christian education, under the clergy and teachers, independent of the planters; a measure of which total but gradual emancipation will be the natural consequence, as it was of a similar procedure in the first ages of Christianity.' We have not now the arguments by which the speaker supported and

enforced these propositions, which require much more elucidation than appears from a surface reading of them. The question of West Indian slavery touched Mr. Gladstone nearly, and some years after this debate, from his place in Parliament, he defended his father from aspersions which had been cast upon him respecting the management of his West Indian estates, in the course of the heat and excitement of the anti-Slavery agitation. One more interesting debate which took place at the Oxford Union must be mentioned. It seems that on the 26th of November, 1829, the Cambridge Union sent a deputation to the sister Union of Oxford with the object of persuading the latter to acknowledge the superiority of Shelley over Byron. Lord Houghton, one of the speakers from Cambridge, long afterwards observed—at the inauguration of the new buildings of the Cambridge Union Society in 1866—'At that time we (the Cambridge undergraduates) were very full of Mr. Shelley. We had printed his "Adonais" for the first time in England, and a friend of ours suggested that, as he had been expelled from Oxford, and been very badly treated in that University, it would be a grand thing for us to defend him there.' With the permission of the Cambridge authorities they accordingly 'went to Oxford—at that time a long, dreary, post-chaise journey of ten hours-and were hospitably entertained by a young student of the name of Gladstone; who, by-the-by, has himself been since expelled.' Next day, however, one of the newspapers stated that the members of the deputation were

'formally received by Gladstone, of Christ Church, and Manning, of Oriel.' Gladstone did not speak in the debate, which was opened by Sir Francis Doyle on behalf of Shelley. Only one Oxonian, Archbishop Manning, opposed the motion. The other Cambridge men were Sunderland, Arthur Henry Hallam, and Monckton Milnes. By a vote of ninety to thirty-three the superiority of Shelley over Byron was affirmed.

The general effect of his Oxford training upon Mr. Gladstone he has himself described, together with what now appears to his maturer mind to be its greatest deficiency. In a speech delivered at the opening of the Palmerston Club, Oxford, in the month of December, 1878, he said, 'I trace in the education of Oxford, of my own time, one great defect. Perhaps it was my own fault; but I must admit that I did not learn. when at Oxford, that which I have learned since, viz., to set a due value on the imperishable and the inestimable principles of human liberty. The temper which, I think, too much prevailed in academic circles was, that liberty was regarded with jealousy, and fear could not be wholly dispensed with.' We have already seen how this sentiment of fear pervaded the University, and was not confined merely to questions of political Mr. Gladstone continued: reform.

<sup>&#</sup>x27;I think that the principle of the Conservative party is jealousy of liberty and of the people, only qualified by fear; but I think the policy of the Liberal party is trust in the people, only qualified by prudence. I can only assure you, gentlemen, that now I am in front of extended popular privileges, I have no fear of those enlargements of the Constitution

I am not in the least degree conscious that I have less reverence for antiquity, for the beautiful, and good, and glorious charges that our ancestors have handed down to us as a patrimony to our race, than I had in other days when I held other political opinions. I have learnt to set the true value upon human liberty, and in whatever I have changed, there, and there only, has been the explanation of the change.'

That is, when Mr. Gladstone entered the sphere of practical politics, and had studied the people more closely, with their wants and aspirations, he lost the fears and forebodings which were the result of academic prejudice. This, in effect, is the substance of his apology, and those who have narrowly watched his public course will, doubtless, need no other explanation of changes which have sometimes been uncharitably described as political tergiversation.

Closing his University career in the year 1831, Mr. Gladstone spent some time in continental travel. He went abroad first in 1832, spending nearly the whole of the months from January to July in Italy. Some years later—viz., from August, 1838, to January, 1839—he again visited Italy, and this time also explored Sicily. He kept a journal of the tour through Sicily, and it will not be uninteresting, we trust, to cite one or two passages from this diary. These extracts not only bear testimony to the writer's acute powers of observation, but also to the variety of his information, and his facility in the use of the English language, at this comparatively early period. Etna has been a source of attraction to the poets from the most ancient times down to that of our own living poet,

Mr. Matthew Arnold, whose *Empedocles on Etna* is, perhaps, the most vigorous of all his conceptions. Mr. Gladstone's susceptible imagination was greatly impressed by the grandeur of this eternal abode of fire. Sicily had also other charms for him, as the ensuing passage—which is expressed with something of the true poetic spirit—proves:—

'After Etna, the temples are certainly the great charm and attraction of Sicily. I do not know whether there is any one among them which, taken alone, exceeds in interest and beauty that of Neptune at Pæstum; but they have the advantage of number and variety, as well as of highly interesting positions. At Segesta the temple is enthroned in a perfect mountain solitude, and it is like a beautiful tomb of its religion, so stately, so entire; while around, but for the one solitary house of the keeper, there is nothing, absolutely nothing, to disturb the apparent reign of Silence and of Death. At Selinus, the huge fragments on the plain seem to make an eminence themselves, and they listen to the ever young and unwearied waves which almost wash their base, and mock their desolation by the image of perpetual life and motion they present, while the tone of their heavy fall upon the beach well accords with the solemnity of the scene. At Girgenti the ridge visible to the mariner from afar is still crowned by a long line of fabrics, presenting to the eye a considerable mass and regularity of structure, and the town is near and visible; yet that town is so entirely the mere phantom of its former glory within its now shrunken limits, that instead of disturbing the effect it rather seems to add a new image and enhance it. The temples enshrine a most pure and salutary principle of art, that which connects grandeur of effect with simplicity of detail; and retaining their beauty and their dignity in their decay, they represent the great man when fallen, as types of that almost highest of human qualities—silent, yet not sullen, endurance.'

Etna has surprising sources of interest for all classes of scientific men, and not least for the student of arboriculture. It presents, at the height of 4,000 feet above the level of the sea, a growth which is reported to be the oldest tree in the world—the venerable chestnut,

'the father of the forest.' It consists not of one vast trunk, but of a group of decayed trees or portions of trees growing in a circle, each with a hollow trunk of venerable antiquity, covered with ferns or ivy, and stretching out a few gnarled branches with scanty foliage. It is said that excavation showed these various stems to be united at a very small depth below the surface of the ground. Travellers have differed in their measurements of this stupendous growth, Admiral Smyth, who takes the lowest estimate, giving 163 feet, and Brydone giving, as the highest, 204 feet. One of the Queens of Arragon is reported to have taken shelter in this tree, with her mounted suite of 100 persons; but we may, perhaps, gather from this that mythology is not confined to the lower latitudes. Higher up the mountain is another venerable chestnut, which, with more reason, probably, may be described, without fear of contradiction, as the largest tree in the world. It rises from one solid stem to a considerable height before it branches. At a distance of two feet from the ground its girth was found by Brydone to be no less than seventy-six feet. These trees are reputed to have flourished for much more than a thousand summers past. Their luxuriant growth is attributed partly to the humid atmosphere of the Bosco elevated above the scorching arid region of the coast, and in part to the wonderful richness of the soil. The luxuriance of the vegetation on the slopes of Etna attracts the attention of every traveller; and Mr. Gladstone remarked upon

this point, 'It seems as if the finest of all soils were produced from the most agonising throes of nature, as the hardiest characters are often reared amidst the severest circumstances. The aspect of this side of Sicily is infinitely more active, and the country is cultivated as well as most parts of Italy.'

Mr. Gladstone made his ascent of Etna at the commencement of the eruption of 1838. He and his party, starting on the 30th of October, found the path nearly uniform from Catania, but the country bore a volcanic aspect at every step. At Nicolosi, rest was disturbed by the distant booming of the mountain. From this point to the Bosco the scenery is described as a dismal tract. The Region of the Wood showed some picturesque spots, resembling an English park, with old oaks and abundant fern. 'Here we found flocks browsing; they are much exposed to sheepstealers, who do not touch travellers, calculating with justice that men do not carry much money to the summit of Etna.' The company passed the Casa degli Inglesi, which registered a temperature of 31°, and then set forth on foot for the crater. A magnificent view of sunrise was obtained.

'Just before we reached the lip of the crater, the guide exultingly pointed out what he declared to be ordinarily the greatest sight of the mountain, namely, the shadow of the cone of Etna, drawn with the utmost delicacy by the newly-risen sun, but of gigantic extent; its point at this moment rested on the mountains of Palermo, probably 100 miles off, and the entire figure was visible, the atmosphere over the mountains having become and continuing perfectly and beautifully transparent, although in the hundreds of valleys which were beneath us, from the E. to the W. of Sicily, and from the mountains of Messina down to Cape Passaro, there

were still abundant vapours waiting for a higher sun to disperse them; but we enjoyed in its perfection this view of the earliest and finest work of the greater light of heaven, in the passage of his beams over this portion of the earth's surface. During the hour we spent on the summit, the vision of the shadow was speedily contracting, and taught us how rapid is the real rise of the sun in the heavens, although its effect is diminished to the eye by a kind of foreshortening.'

The writer next describes, in vivid and powerful language, the scene presented to the view at the very mouth of the crater. A large space, one mile in circumference, which a few days before had been one fathomless pit, from which issued masses of smoke, was now absolutely filled up to within a few feet of the brim all round. A great mass of lava, a portion of the contents of this immense pit, was seen to detach itself by degrees from one behind. 'It opened like an orange, and we saw the red-hot fibres stretch in a broader and still broader vein, until the mass had found a support on the new ground it occupied in front; as we came back on our way down this had grown black.' A stick put to it took fire immediately. Within a few yards of this lava were found pieces of ice, formed on the outside of the stones by Frost, 'which here disputes every inch of ground with his fierce rival Fire.' Mr. Gladstone and his fellowtravellers were the first spectators of the great volcanic action of this year.\* From the highest peak attainable, the party gazed upon the splendid prospect to the east spread out before them, embracing the Messina moun-

<sup>\*</sup> Fuller details of this ascent of Mount Etna may be found in Murray's Handbook to Sicily.

tains and the fine kindred outline of the Calabrian coast, described by Virgil in the third book of the *Eneid*. Mr. Gladstone graphically describes the eruption which took place, and of which he was the enraptured witness. Lava masses, of 150 to 200 lbs. weight, were thrown to a distance of probably a mile and a half; smaller ones to a distance even more remote. The showers were most copious; and the writer was struck by the closeness of the descriptions in Virgil with the actual reality of the eruption witnessed by himself. On this point he observes:—

'Now how faithfully has Virgil (Æ. iii., 571, et seqq.) comprised these particulars, doubtless not without exaggeration, in his fine description. First, the thunder-clap, or crack—

"Horrificis juxta tonat Ætna ruinis."

Secondly, the vibration of the ground to the report—

"Et, fessum quoties mutet latus, intremere omnem Murmure Trinacriam."

Thirdly, the sheet of flame-

"Attolitque globos flammarum, et sidera lambit."

Fourthly, the smoke—

"Et cœlum subtexere fumo."

Fifthly, the fire-shower—

"Scopulos avulsaque viscera montis Erigit eructans, liquefactaque saxa sub auras Cum gemitu glomerat, fundoque exæstuat imo."

Sixthly, the column of ash—

"Atram prorumpit ad æthera nubem, Turbine fumantem piceo et candente favillà."

And this is within the limits of twelve lines. Modern poetry has its own merits, but the conveyance of information is not, generally speaking, one of them. What would Virgil have thought of authors publishing poems with explanatory notes (to illustrate is a different matter), as if they were so many books of conundrums? Indeed, this vice is of very late years.'

The whole description from whence this extract is taken is very effective and animated. It gives with great freshness the first impressions of a mind susceptible to the grand and imposing aspects of nature.

## CHAPTER III.

## MEMBER FOR NEWARK.

England in 1832—Passing of the Reform Bill—Anticipated Results of the Measure—Mr. Gladstone a Candidate for Newark—His Appearance before the Electors—The Youthful Candidate described—His First Election Address—'Heckling' on the Hustings—Mr. Gladstone returned by a large Majority—Local Opinions upon the New Member—A Political Prediction—The Vituperation of Opponents—First Step in a Parliamentary. Career.

During the latter part of Mr. Gladstone's visit to Italy in 1832, England was in a condition of feverish political excitement and expectancy. The people had just fought and won one of the greatest constitutional battles recorded in our Parliamentary history. After a prolonged struggle, a defiance of public order, and riots in various parts of the country, the Reform Bill had become law. The King had clearly perceived the wishes of the people, and—disregarding the advice of those members of the aristocracy who recommended him to brave the national will—had signified his assent to the measure which could no longer be delayed with safety. The bill became law on the 7th of June, his Majesty being represented by Royal Commissioners, although a portion of the press loudly demanded the presence of the King himself at the final stage of a measure which transformed the whole of the electoral

arrangements of the United Kingdom. It was alleged that the Sovereign would forfelt the confidence of all time quartiers if he did not perform this coremony in person, and calling himself as publicly as possible in restimacy of the subjugation to which his crown and the peers had been reduced. But the King, probally considering that he had already made sufficient sumifiers to the popular will, declined to attend the ceremony in the House of Lords. King and Queen see sellenly apar in their palace. Peer and country gentleman moddily awaited the rain of their country and the destruction of their property. Fanaticism still reved at the wakkedness it a people; the people, elementing for work, still specunihed before the mysterious disease which was continually claiming more and more victims. But the nation cared not the the silledness of the Court the foreholdings of the harded chasses, the ravings of the judgit or even the mysterious energious of a new plagme. The tiery groom which had evershadewed the land had been refleved by one single ray. The victory had teem with The fall half become law!"

The friends of Reform com looked forward to a realisate a of the fruits of victory cand men of all states— i opinion forecast with speculative wonder—mingled in not a few instances with apprehension— the temposition of the first returned House of formatica. The result was a surprise to the extreme

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politicians of both parties. The Reformers did not carry everything before them, as they anticipated, neither were the Tories the enormous losers which they expected to be. Ministers preserved their power, and were victorious in England, and still more so in Scotland. In Ireland, however, they sustained · very serious defeats. Special constituencies, also, in England proved treacherous, and many popular men, and earnest friends of Reform, went to the wall. addition to many counties, Bristol, Norwich, Stamford, Hertford, Newark, and other boroughs, pronounced against the Ministry. The Duke of Newcastle, who had propounded the memorable political maxim, 'Have I not a right to do what I like with my own?' once more regained his ducal influence, which had been rudely curtailed in 1831. During this time of revolution the Continent was greatly disturbed, and the internal condition of England was likewise one to be deeply deplored. There was little trade, and an unfavourable revenue; riots occurred in the provinces and in Ireland; the working classes were discontented; labour was diminishing, pauperism was increasing, and the cholera was claiming its victims everywhere. poor looked to the operation of the Reform Bill as the first act of their redemption, while the landed gentry regarded it as the first sign of the declension of our national greatness. Both classes were disappointed; the former had to look elsewhere for a revival of commercial prosperity, and the latter discovered that the ox in the stall, and the soil which they owned and

tilled, were just as safe and inviolate as they were before the passing of the terrible act.

Mr. Gladstone, having received an overture from the Duke of Newcastle (with whose son, the Earl of Lincoln, he was on terms of intimate friendship) to contest the representation of Newark, hurried back from the Continent for that purpose. Before the close of September, 1832, he was actively engaged in canvassing the borough. He immediately became very popular in the town, and one of the local journals remarked, that if candour and ability had any influence upon the electors, there would soon be a change in the representation. A week later came accounts of 'glorious' meetings, with the assurance that Gladstone's return might be fully calculated upon. The other candidates were Mr. W. F. Handley and Mr. Serjeant Wilde. The last-named gentleman was an advanced Liberal, who had unsuccessfully contested the borough in 1829 and 1830. After the latter contest a piece of plate had been presented to him 'by his ardent friends, the Blue electors of the borough -who, by their exertions and sufferings in the cause of independence, largely conduced to awaken the attention of the nation to the necessity of a Reform in Parliament.' The inscription further went on to state, 'Upon this humble token of respect (contributed in the hour of defeat) the Blue electors of Newark inscribe their sense of the splendid ability, unwearied perseverance, and disinterested public spirit displayed by Serjeant Wilde in maintaining the two

contests of 1829 and 1830, in order to emancipate the borough from political thraldom, and restore to its inhabitants the free exercise of their long-lost rights.' In the following year, 1831, when the Reform fever had attained its height, Serjeant Wilde was successful in defeating the Duke of Newcastle's nominee, and became member for the borough. The election which now succeeded upon the passing of the Reform Bill was consequently looked forward to with unusual interest, and it was early perceived that the struggle would be of a close and determined character.

Serjeant Wilde had the advantage of being already known in the borough, and he was extremely popular with a portion of the constituency. Mr. Gladstone was a complete stranger to the electors when he appeared amongst them in response to the Duke of Newcastle's invitation—though, as we have seen, he speedily gained favour. His age was twenty-two, and in appearance he was somewhat robust.\* There were in his youthful face none of those deep lines which have rendered his countenance so striking in maturer years; and one who remembers him well at this period describes his bright, thoughtful look, and attractive bearing. He was considered a handsome man, and possessed a most intelligent and expressive countenance. This description is amply borne out by an oil painting of Mr. Gladstone,

<sup>•</sup> Some of these personal details concerning Mr. Gladstone at the time of his first election for Newark, have been courteously supplied to the author by Mr. Cornelius Brown, author of the *History of Newark*.

executed only a few years later for the Newark Conservative Club, on the walls of which club it hung for many years. A few engravings still exist of this picture; and a casual glance at the portrait will scarcely enable the spectator to identify the plump features, the full face, the large dark eyes, and eyebrows, and decidedly robust aspect there presented with the later rugged aspect of the statesman's countenance, and his general appearance. Yet a closer inspection will serve to bring out some points of resemblance, for even at the early age of twenty-two there is to be perceived the same broad intellectual forehead, the somewhat massive and prominent nose, the same anxious eyes, and the earnest expression so characteristic of the man upwards of a generation later.

But while the personal appearance of Mr. Gladstone—so youthful and yet so manly—told in his favour, it was not long ere he made a still more favourable impression upon the burgesses by his oratory. His speeches demonstrated that he lacked neither arguments, nor words wherewith to clothe them. He needed, indeed, to call into requisition all his ability as a speaker, for (as already observed) the contest was one of unusual vigour. Serjeant Wilde, a powerful antagonist in other respects, was also a veteran platform orator. He was, moreover, in possession, and did not reflect with complacency upon the prospect of being displaced by one whom he regarded as a mere political stripling. But besides

having the weight of the ducal influence at his back, Mr. Gladstone was warmly supported by the Red Club, whose members were alike active and influential. The young Tory candidate and his supporters entered upon the contest with enthusiasm, and worked with unflagging spirit and untiring energy.

Mr. Gladstone's first election address was dated 'Clinton Arms, Newark, Oct. 9th, 1832,' and was inscribed 'To the worthy and independent electors of the Borough of Newark.' As this document, in the light of subsequent events, has more than a passing interest, and is distinguished for its ingenious reasoning upon the great question of Slavery, then agitating the public mind, we append it in full:—

'Having now completed my canvass, I think it my duty as well to remind you of the principles on which I have solicited your votes, as freely to assure my friends that its result has placed my success beyond a doubt.

I have not requested your favour on the ground of adherence to the opinions of any man or party, further than such adherence can be fairly understood from the conviction I have not hesitated to avow, that we must watch and resist that unenquiring and undiscriminating desire for change amongst us, which threatens to produce, along with partial good, a melancholy preponderance of mischief; which, I am persuaded, would aggravate beyond computation the deep-seated evils of our social state, and the heavy burthens of our industrial classes; which, by disturbing our peace, destroys confidence, and strikes at the root of prosperity. Thus it has done already; and thus, we must therefore believe, it will do.

For the mitigation of those evils, we must, I think, look not only to particular measures, but to the restoration of sounder general principles. I mean especially that principle on which alone the incorporation of Religion with the State, in our Constitution, can be defended; that the duties of governors are strictly and peculiarly religious; and that legislatures, like individuals, are bound to carry throughout their acts the spirit of the high truths they have acknowledged. Principles are now arrayed against our institutions; and not by truckling nor by temporising—not by oppression nor corruption—but by principles they must be met.

Among their first results should be a sedulous and special attention to the interests of the poor, founded upon the rule that those who are the least able to take care of themselves should be most regarded by others. Particularly it is a duty to endeavour by every means, that labour may receive adequate remuneration; which, unhappily, among several classes of our fellow-countrymen, is not now the case. Whatever measures, therefore, whether by correction of the poor laws, allotment of cottage grounds, or otherwise, tend to promote this object, I deem entitled to the warmest support: with all such as are calculated to secure sound moral conduct in any class of society.

I proceed to the momentous question of Slavery, which I have found entertained among you in that candid and temperate spirit which alone befits its nature, or promises to remove its difficulties. If I have not recognised the right of an irresponsible society to interpose between me and the electors, it has not been from any disrespect to its members, nor from unwillingness to answer theirs or any other questions on which the electors may desire to know my views. To the esteemed secretary of the society I submitted my reasons for silence; and I made a point of stating these views to him, in his character of a voter.

As regards the abstract lawfulness of Slavery, I acknowledge it simply as importing the right of one man to the labour of another; and I rest it upon the fact that Scripture, the paramount authority upon such a point, gives directions to persons standing in the relation of master to slave, for their conduct in that relation; whereas, were the matter absolutely and necessarily sinful, it would not regulate the manner. Assuming sin as the cause of degradation, it strives, and strives most effectually, to cure the latter by extirpating the former. We are agreed, that both the physical and the moral bondage of the slave are to be abolished. The question is as to the order, and the order only; now Scripture attacks the moral evil before the temporal one, and the temporal through the moral one, and I am content with the order which Scripture has established.

To this end, I desire to see immediately set on foot, by impartial and sovereign authority, an universal and efficient system of Christian instruction, not intended to resist designs of individual piety and wisdom for the religious improvement of the negroes, but to do thoroughly what they can only do partially.

As regards immediate emancipation, whether with or without compensation, there are several minor reasons against it; but that which weighs with me is, that it would, I much fear, exchange the evils now affecting the negro, for others which are weightier—for a relapse into deeper debasement, if not for bloodshed and internal war. Let fitness be made a condition for emancipation; and let us strive to bring him to that fitness, by the shortest possible course. Let him enjoy the means of earning his

freedom through honest and industrious habits; thus the same instruments which attain his liberty shall likewise render him competent to use it; and thus, I earnestly trust, without risk of blood, without violation of property, with unimpaired benefit to the negro, and with the utmost speed which prudence will admit, we shall arrive at that exceedingly desirable consummation, the utter extinction of slavery.

And now, gentlemen, as regards the enthusiasm with which you have rallied round your ancient flag, and welcomed the humble representative of those principles whose emblem it is, I trust that neither the lapse of time, nor the seductions of prosperity, can ever efface it from my memory. To my opponents, my acknowledgments are due for the good-humour and kindness with which they have received me; and while I would thank my friends for their zealous and unwearied exertions in my favour, I briefly but emphatically assure them, that if promises be an adequate foundation of confidence, or experience a reasonable ground of calculation, our victory is sure.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,

Your obliged and obedient Servant,

W. E. GLADSTONE.'

The Red or Conservative Club numbered within its ranks upwards of 650 voters, every one of whom promised their suffrages to Mr. Gladstone, the thorough Conservative candidate. He also received an absolute promise of support from about 240 other electors. The matter was thus regarded as settled by a writer in a periodical of the day entitled Old England. The question then frequently put, 'Who is Mr. Gladstone?' the same writer thus answered:
—'He is the son of the friend of Mr. Canning, the great Liverpool merchant. He is, we understand, not more than four or five and twenty,\* but he has won golden opinions from all sorts of people, and promises to be an ornament to the House of Commons.'

<sup>\*</sup> The young candidate was not yet twenty-three.

The nomination was held on the 11th of December, the polling being fixed for the two following days. At the hustings Mr. Gladstone was compelled to run the gauntlet of much hostile questioning, and had not the opportunity of doing more than making a very brief reply. Scotch elections have rendered us familiar with the practice known as 'heckling,' and Mr. Gladstone was subjected to this process upon his first appearance at Newark. From the reports in the local journals, it would appear that after the nomination of Mr. W. Farnworth Handley, Mr. Serjeant Wilde, and Mr. William Ewart Gladstone respectively—

'Mr. Gillson enquired of Mr. Gladstone how he came to Newark after he had neglected to attend a meeting of the electors to which he was invited, and whether he was not the Duke of Newcastle's nominee?

Mr. Gladstone wished to have Mr. Gillson's definition of the term "nominee," and then he would answer.

Mr. Gillson said he meant a person sent by the Duke of Newcastle to be pushed down the electors' throats, whether they would or not.

Mr. Gladstone replied, then according to that definition he was not a nominee. He came to Newark by the invitation of the Red Club, than whom none were more respectable and intelligent. The Club sent to the Duke of Newcastle to know if he could recommend a candidate to them, and in consequence he was appealed to, and accepted the invitation of the Red Club.

Mr. Kelk asked Mr. Gladstone what he thought of the passage in Exodus xxi. 16—"He that stealeth a man and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death;" and whether his father was not a dealer in human flesh?

Mr. Gladstone was aware of the crime of man-stealing being condemned.

Mr. Kelk—What state of things did he wish to return to? and ought a man to be put to death for forging a £1 note the same as for killing his fellow-creature?

Mr. Gladstone said he had in view the time when our forefathers acted upon manly and God-fearing principles. We are not the nation we were

two hundred years ago. The crime of forgery was difficult to decide upon, as we were a great commercial nation. The question put by Mr. Kelk, however, was easily answered in the negative.

Mr. Andrews, an elector, then entered upon a long address on the subject of negro slavery, and required Mr. Gladstone's opinion upon the subject.

Mr. Gladstone gave it unequivocally, that he desired the emancipation of slaves upon such terms as would preserve them and the colonies from destruction. The slaves ought first to be fully prepared for emancipation.'

A long discussion for and against the results of emancipation in St. Domingo and Antigua followed. Mr. Gladstone was now unfortunately placed. Being the third in order of the three candidates proposed, his address to the electors came last. Serjeant Wilde exhausted the patience of the people by his very lengthy speech, and the Tory candidate was condemned to follow amidst a scene of outrageous noise and uproar. The mass of people in front of the hustings had already stood for nearly seven hours, and showed a disinclination to be detained with another three hours' address, which, as a local chronicler naïvely puts it, 'from Mr. Gladstone's talents we were far from thinking not pos-Serjeant Wilde's policy in occupying the attention of the electors for an inordinate length of time was almost universally condemned. Mr. Gladstone was but able to utter a few comments upon the prominent topic of slavery, when the hooting and hissing drowned his voice, and he found it impossible to proceed. A show of hands being demanded, it was declared to be in favour of Mr. Handley and Serjeant Wilde. For Mr. Gladstone few hands were held up beyond those of his supporters on the hustings. A poll was accordingly demanded on his behalf.

Since 1832, few of those scenes of violence, and even of bloodshed, which formerly distinguished Parliamentary elections in many English boroughs, have been witnessed. Some of these lawless outbreaks were doubtless due to the unpopularity of the candidates forced upon the electors; but even in the larger towns - where territorial influence had little sway -riots occurred upon which we look back now in almost doubtful amazement. Men holding strong political views have ceased to enforce those views by the aid of brickbats and other dangerous missiles. Yet at the beginning of the present century such arguments were very popular. And to the violence which prevailed was added the most unblushing bribery. Several boroughs long notorious for extensive bribery have since been disfranchised. The practice, however, extended to most towns in the kingdom, though it was not always carried on in the same open manner. By a long-established custom, a voter at Hull received a donation of two guineas, or four for a plumper. In Liverpool men were openly paid for their votes; and Lord Cochrane stated in the House of Commons that, after his return for Honiton, he sent the town-crier round the borough to tell the voters to go to the chief banker for £10 10s. each. The great enlargement of the constituencies, secured by the Reform Bill of 1832, did much to put an

end to this disgraceful condition of things; but to a wider political enlightenment also, some portion of the credit for such a result must be attributed.

The election for Newark was of an exciting character, but devoid of those objectionable elements just alluded to. If Mr. Gladstone was out of favour at the hustings, the polling told a very different tale. From the first he took the lead, and became M.P. for Newark by a substantial majority, the numbers being — Gladstone, 882; Handley, 793; Wilde, 719. Commenting upon this result, the Newark representative of the Nottingham Journal said they had been told there was no reaction against the Ministry, no reaction in favour of Conservative principles. 'The delusion has now vanished, and made room for sober reason and reflection. The shadow satisfies no longer; and the return of Mr. Gladstone—to the discomfiture of the learned Serjeant and his friends—has restored the town of Newark to that high rank which it formerly held in the estimation of the friends of order and good government. We venture to predict that the losing candidate in this contest has suffered so severely that he will never more show his face at Newark on a similar occasion.'

A few days after the election Mr. Gladstone attended a meeting of the Constitutional Club at Nottingham, and delivered a lengthy address. Alluding to this address and to the young member, a Conservative journalist—who, if still living, may

look back upon his words as the first prediction of Mr. Gladstone's great political future — observed, 'He is a gentleman of amiable manners and the most extraordinary talent; and we venture to predict, without the slightest exaggeration, that he will be one day classed amongst the most able statesmen in the British Senate.' This prophecy has been fulfilled strictly to the letter, but in a spirit wholly different from that which its utterer expected. Mr. Gladstone also spoke at Newark, in company with his friend, the Earl of Lincoln, delivering 'a manly, eloquent speech, replete with sound constitutional sentiments, high moral feeling, and ability of the most distinguished order.' Remembering what Mr. Gladstone has since done for the press of this country, it is curious to find him at this time stating that he could not support the abolition of taxes upon knowledge. He gave as his grounds for this policy, that the taxes not only assisted the revenue, but tended to prevent too great a circulation of bad matter.

It must not be supposed that, able and successful as Mr. Gladstone was, he had no enemies. On the contrary, he had many political opponents who were deeply envenomed against him. As we have given the approving language of his friends, we will now quote the opinion of his foes upon the fortunate candidate and his election. This opinion was expressed as follows in the *Reflector*:—'Mr. Gladstone is the son of Gladstone of Liverpool, a person who (we are speaking of the father) has amassed a large

fortune by West India dealings. In other words, a great part of his gold has sprung from the blood of black slaves. Respecting the youth himself — a person fresh from college, and whose mind is as much like a sheet of white foolscap as possible—he was utterly unknown. He came recommended by no claim in the world except the will of the Duke. The Duke nodded unto Newark, and Newark sent back the man, or rather the boy of his choice. What! Is this to be, now that the Reform Bill has done its work? Are sixteen hundred men still to bow down to a wooden-headed lord, as the people of Egypt used to do to their beasts, to their reptiles, and their ropes of onions? There must be something wrong—something imperfect. What is it? What is wanting? Why, the Ballot! If there be a doubt of this (and we believe there is a doubt, even amongst intelligent men), the tale of Newark must set the question at rest. Serjeant Wilde was met on his entry into the town by almost the whole population. He was greeted everywhere, cheered every-He was received with delight by his friends, and with good and earnest wishes for his success by his nominal foes. The voters for Gladstone went up to that candidate's booth (the slave-driver, as they called him) with Wilde's colours. People who had before voted for Wilde, on being asked to give their suffrage, said, "We cannot, we dare not. We have lost half our business, and shall lose the rest if we go against the Duke. We would do anything in our power for Serjeant Wilde, and for the cause, but we cannot starve!" Now what say ye, our merry men, touching the Ballot?' Such were the hostile reflections passed upon the successful candidate. The adage, that 'all is fair in love and war'—including, we presume, political warfare—was transgressed on this and other occasions, the personal criticisms on Mr. Gladstone sometimes passing the bounds of decorum. But to the bitterness of their defeat must be attributed much of the rancour exhibited by the losing party; they had counted confidently upon victory.

In the ordeal through which political candidates are called upon to pass, there is a mingling of agreeable and objectionable elements; and if Mr. Gladstone met with considerable vituperation at the hands of his opponents, he had the solid and satisfying fact to fall back upon, that, in the contest which had just been waged, he had been placed at the head of the poll. The ambition of his youthful days was now in partial process of being realised. He had ardently desired to become a member of that Senate whose glories of statesmanship and of eloquence were the theme of the civilised world. He was now entitled to cross its august threshold: the first step in his Parliamentary career had been successfully taken, and the whilom student of Christ Church was member for Newark.

## CHAPTER IV.

## EARLY SPEECHES IN PARLIAMENT.

The First Reformed Parliament—Mr. Gladstone's Maiden Speech—The Slave Trade—The Member for Newark's View of the Question — Abolition of Colonial Slavery—Bribery in Liverpool—A Defence of the Irish Church—The Universities Admission Bill—Demoralisation of the Whigs—Dismissal of the Melbourne Ministry—Mr. Gladstone Junior Lord of the Treasury under Sir Robert Peel—Election Incidents at Newark—The Premier and his Policy—The Under-Secretaryship for the Colonies—Defeat and Resignation of the Government—The Affairs of Canada—Speech by Mr. Gladstone on Church Rates—Death of King William IV.—Mr. Gladstone nominated for Manchester—Incidents of the Contest—The Session of 1838—The Slavery Question once more—Powerful Speech by Mr. Gladstone—His Appearance in the House—Personal Details—Character of his Oratory—Debate on National Education—The War with China—Fall of the Whig Government——Sir Robert Peel again in Office—Mr. Gladstone Vice-President of the Board of Trade—His Marriage, Family, &c.

The first Parliament summoned after the passing of the Reform Act met on the 29th of January, 1833, and on the 5th of February the King attended and delivered the Royal speech in person. Of that celebrated Parliament but few members now remain. Who, in that popular House of Assembly, could have predicted the future of the newly-elected member for Newark? Even the member himself—who had nothing whatever against him, save, as Chatham said, 'the atrocious crime of being a young man'—sanguine as might be his political hopes, could scarcely have ventured to anticipate in his most ambitious dreams

the period when he should be called upon to fill the position once held by the illustrious Canning.

The new House of Commons—which might now be emphatically called the people's House of Parliament-did not fulfil all the expectations of the country, though the labours of its first session have given it an indelible place in history. Had the session of 1833 been barren of all other measures, it would still be entitled to immortal honour for wiping away a discreditable blot that had too long stained the escutcheon of England. The system of slavery, which until this year still existed in the British colonies, was abolished at a cost of twenty millions sterling. Besides the passing of this great humanitarian enactment, during the same session the commercial monopoly of the East India Company was abolished. The trade to the East was thus thrown open to all merchants, and the beneficial effects of the measure were speedily apparent.

Mr. Gladstone's maiden speech in the House of Commons differed completely from the first melodramatic display of his great rival. From the first the young member for Newark appears to have favourably impressed the House. Modest in demeanour, earnest in manner, and fluent of speech, he at once commanded the respect and attention of his fellow-members. His earliest effort was in connection with the Slavery question, but the speech was delivered neither in the course of a great debate, nor upon a motion on the one topic then occupying the public

mind. During the debate on the Ministerial proposition for the emancipation of slaves, which was brought forward on the 14th of May, 1833, Lord Howick, ex-Under-Secretary for the Colonies, had referred to an estate in Demerara, owned by Mr. Gladstone's father, for the purpose of showing that a great destruction of human life had taken place in the West Indies, owing to the manner in which the slaves were worked. It was in reply to this accusation that Mr. Gladstone delivered his maiden speech on the 17th of May, the occasion being the presentation of a petition from Portarlington for the abolition of slavery. He challenged the noble lord's statement respecting the decrease of seventy-one slaves upon the estate of Vreeden Hoop, which had been attributed to the increased cultivation of sugar. The real cause of the decrease lay in the very large proportion of Africans upon the estate. When it came into his father's possession, it was so weak, owing to the great number of Africans upon it, that he was obliged to add two hundred people to the gang. It was notorious that Africans were imported into Demerara and Trinidad up to a later period than into any other colony; and he should, when the proper time arrived, be able to prove that the decrease on Vreeden Hoop was among the old Africans, and that there was an increase going on in the Creole population, which would be a sufficient answer to the statement of the noble lord. quantity of sugar produced was small in proportion to that produced on many other estates. The cultivation

of cotton in Demerara had been abandoned, and that of coffee much diminished, and the people employed in these sources of production had been transferred to the cultivation of sugar. Demerara, too, was peculiarly circumstanced, and the labour of the same number of negroes, distributed over the year, would produce in that colony a given quantity of sugar, with less injury to the people, than negroes could produce in other colonies, working only at the stated periods of crop. 'He was ready to admit that this cultivation was of a more severe character than others; and he would ask, were there not certain employments in this and other countries more destructive to life than others? He would only instance those of painting and working in lead mines, both of which were well known to have that tendency. The noble lord attempted to impugn the character of the gentleman acting as manager of his father's estates; and in making this selection he had certainly been most unfortunate; for there was not an individual in the colony more proverbial for humanity, and the kind treatment of his slaves, than Mr. Maclean.' Mr. Gladstone, in concluding this warm defence of his relative, said he held in his hand two letters from the agent, in which that gentleman spoke in the kindest terms of the people under his charge; described their state of happiness, content, and healthiness—their good conduct, and the infrequency of severe punishment and recommended certain additional comforts, which he said the slaves well deserved.

On the 3rd of June, on the resumption of the debate on the abolition of slavery, Mr. Gladstone again addressed the House. He now entered more fully into the charges which Lord Howick had brought against the management of his father's estates in Demerara, and showed their groundlessness. When he had discussed the existing aspect of slavery in Trinidad, Jamaica, and other places, he proceeded to deal with the general question. He confessed, with shame and pain, that cases of wanton cruelty had occurred in the colonies, but added that they would always exist, particularly under the system of slavery; and this was unquestionably a substantial reason why the British Legislature and public should set themselves in good earnest to provide for its extinction: but he maintained that these instances of cruelty could easily be explained by the West Indians, who represented them as rare and isolated cases, and who maintained that the ordinary relation of master and slave was one of kindliness and not of hostility. He deprecrated cruelty, and he deprecated slavery, both of which were abhorrent to the nature of Englishmen; but conceding these things, he asked, 'Were not Englishmen to retain a right to their own honestly and legally-acquired property?' But the cruelty did not exist, and he saw no reason for the attack which had recently been made upon the West India interest. He hoped the House would make a point to adopt the principle of compensation, and to stimulate the slave to genuine and spontaneous industry. If this

were not done, and moral instruction were not imparted to the slaves, liberty would prove a curse instead of a blessing to them. Touching upon the property question, and the proposed plans for emancipation, Mr. Gladstone said that the House might consume its time and exert its wisdom in devising these plans, but without the concurrence of the Colonial Legislatures, success would be hopeless. He thought there was excessive wickedness in any violent interference under the present circumstances. They were still in the midst of unconcluded inquiries, and to pursue the measure then under discussion, at that moment, was to commit an act of great and unnecessary hostility towards the island of Jamaica. 'It was the duty of the House to place as broad a distinction as possible between the idle and the industrious slaves, and nothing could be too strong to secure the freedom of the latter; but, with respect to the idle slaves, no period of emancipation could hasten their improvement. If the labours of the House should be conducted to a satisfactory issue, it would redound to the honour of the nation, and to the reputation of his Majesty's Ministers, whilst it would be delightful to the West India planters themselves—for they must feel that to hold in bondage their fellow-men must always involve the greatest responsibility. But let not any man think of carrying this measure by force. England rested her power not upon physical force, but upon her principles, her intellect, and virtue; and if this great measure were not placed on a fair basis, or were conducted by

violence, he should lament it, as a signal for the ruin of the Colonies and the downfall of the Empire.' The attitude of Mr. Gladstone, as borne out by the tenor of his speech, was not one of hostility to emancipation, though he was undoubtedly unfavourable to an immediate and an indiscriminate enfranchisement. He demanded, moreover, that the interests of the planters should be duly regarded.

The result of the labours of the House on this question is matter of history. The abolition of Colonial slavery was decreed. As already stated, a sum of £20,000,000 was voted to the slave-owners as compensation for their losses, and the great and noble work initiated by Mr. Wilberforce was thus finally crowned with success.

Mr. Gladstone rose on two or three other occasions during the session of 1833. On the 4th of July Mr. Mark Phillips moved that a Select Committee be appointed to pursue the inquiries entered into by the Committee appointed on the 6th of March, to take into consideration the petition presented to the House on the 21st of February from certain inhabitants of Liverpool, complaining of bribery and corruption in that borough. Mr. Gladstone, speaking upon this motion, admitted that the proceedings at the election of 1830 were sufficient to secure for the town of Liverpool an immortality of disgrace; but had it not been for this he should have had no apprehension as to the character of the votes of honourable gentlemen. Before 1830 direct bribery had not prevailed at the

elections extensively or systematically. He denied that such a body of evidence had been collected with respect to the last election as to warrant the assumption that bribery and corruption did during that election prevail in Liverpool systematically or extensively. 'If the cases of bribery were so miserably few—if the cases of corruption, of asking for bribes, and of a disposition to receive them were equivocal, and limited to the allegations of one side, and contradicted as far as the nature of the case admitted by the other—he implored the House of Commons in the name of principle, in the name of equity, in the name of common sense, to refuse further inquiry, and not to immolate on such insufficient pretexts the rights of the freemen; he implored them not to offer so poor a morsel to appease the hunger of reform.' The inquiry, however, was voted by 166 to 84.

The name of the member for Newark appears in various division lists in the course of this session, and he spoke in the debate which took place upon Lord Althorp's Church Temporalities (Ireland) Bill. On the 8th of July, on the question that this bill should pass, Mr. Gladstone said he would not shelter himself under a silent vote. He was prepared to defend the Irish Church, and if it had abuses, which he did not now deny, those abuses were to be ascribed to the ancestors and predecessors of those who then surrounded him. He admitted that the Irish Church had slumbered. He feared that the effect of the bill would be to place the Church on an untenable founda-

tion. He was unwilling to see the number of Irish bishops reduced. He had always regarded it as a well-established principle that as long as a Church was national the State ought to be taxed to support it; and if the Government meant to maintain the Protestant Church in Ireland, they ought to enforce this maxim; but it was not the proper way to establish or maintain the Church to proceed by laying further burdens on the body of the clergy, who, God knows, were already not overburthened with money—as was done by that measure. He had little doubt the Government would carry the bill by a large majority, and if they did, he could only hope that it would produce the effects which they had ascribed to it -namely, of securing and propping up the Irish Protestant Church. The bill was carried by 274 votes to 94, Mr. Gladstone's name appearing in the minority.

In 1834 he addressed the House very briefly in connection with the Liverpool Freemen Bill, inflicting disfranchisement upon a section of the electors for bribery. When Mr. Hume's Universities Admission Bill was brought forward, it found a strenuous opponent in the young member. One great object of the bill was to remove the necessity of subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles on entering the University of Oxford. Mr. Gladstone maintained that although the measure proposed to alter materially the constitution of the universities, it would be practically inoperative. Yet the bill, while not working out its professed

objects, would nevertheless inevitably lead to great dissension and confusion, and eventually to endless applications and legislation in the House. It was said of the ancient Romans, that they—

## ' Made a solitude and called it peace.'

He very much feared that the House, in establishing their present principle of religious liberty, would drive from their functions men who had so long done honour and service to their country, and thus inaugurate their reign of religious peace by an act of the grossest tyranny. The bill passed by 164 to 75.

It was not to be expected either that the practical ability or the debating power foreshadowed in these early speeches of the new Tory member for Newark would escape the attention of the leaders of his party. But recognition came earlier than even the young orator himself could have anticipated. Towards the close of 1834 it became evident that there were no longer the necessary elements of cohesion in the Liberal Ministry. Amongst the many causes of its downfall not the least was the transference of Lord Althorp to the Upper House. His lordship, during his continuance in the Commons, had been able to keep the Ministerialists together, as one tolerably compact body. But demoralisation quickly set in-a demoralisation accelerated by the growing unpopularity of the Whigs with the country. In the middle of October the Melbourne Ministry was summarily dismissed by the Sovereign. Lord Melbourne had waited upon the King at Brighton to take his commands on the appointment of a Chancellor of the Exchequer, in the room of Lord Althorp, when his Majesty raised objections to the reconstruction of the Cabinet. The King, further, sent a letter to the Duke of Wellington, who attended upon his Majesty and advised that Sir Robert Peel should be sent for. Sir Robert, who was then travelling in Italy, hastened home, and on the 9th of December accepted the King's commands to form a Ministry.

On the 24th Mr. Gladstone, having accepted the office of Junior Lord of the Treasury under Sir Robert Peel, issued his address to his constituents at Newark. In that address he reviewed the position of parties, which, since the last general election two years before, had essentially changed. The best friends of the late Ministry had been alienated from it in consequence of its tendency towards rash, violent, and indefinite innovation; and there were even 'those among the servants of the King who did not scruple to solicit the suffrages of their constituents, with promises to act on the principles of Radicalism.' Mr. Gladstone went on to say, 'The question has then, as it appears to me, become, whether we are to hurry onwards at intervals, but not long ones, through the medium of the ballot, short parliaments, and other questions called popular, into republicanism or anarchy; or whether, independently of all party distinctions, the people will support the Crown in the discharge of its duty to maintain in efficiency, and transmit in safety, those old and valuable institutions under which our country has greatly flourished.' In the last paragraph of this address, however, the writer said, 'Let me add shortly, but emphatically, concerning the reform of actual abuses, whether in Church or State, that I regard it as a sacred duty—a duty at all times, and certainly not least at a period like this, when the danger of neglecting it is most clear and imminent—a duty not inimical to true and determined Conservative principle, nor a curtailment or modification of such principle, but its legitimate consequences, or rather an actual element of its composition.'

Mr. Handley, the second Conservative member for the borough of Newark, having retired, Mr. Gladstone and the Liberal candidate, Mr. Serjeant Wilde, were returned without opposition. The Junior Lord of the Treasury appears to have again quite fascinated his constituents, and, amongst other festivities, we find that he attended the Dispensary Ball at Newark with the Duke of Newcastle. A local journal describes him at this time as one of the most talented young men who entered the last Parliament. His 'splendid talents and amiable character' were the theme of conversation in the borough. Mr. Gladstone's speech on the hustings was an amplification of the address we have in substance just given. After the election came the old custom of chairing the members, when a scene of the most animated description took place. Mr. Gladstone's procession set out from the Clinton Arms Inn. His chair was splendid and elegant, and

attracted general admiration; 'it was placed on a groundwork laid upon the springs of a four-wheel carriage, and drawn by six beautiful grey horses, the riders dressed in silk jackets.' As the procession wended its way through the streets the inhabitants were most peaceably inclined. 'Never before did the town of Newark present so pleasing and so glorious a sight!' The 'red' lion and the 'blue' lamb lay down together (the colours of the quadrupeds may be reversed at pleasure), and all was harmony, and all was peace. Alighting at his committee room, Mr. Gladstone delivered an address of thanks to upwards of 6,000 persons, his speech being greeted with 'deafening cheers.'

The policy of the new Ministry was defined by its chief in his address to the electors of Tamworth. Sir Robert Peel said he considered the Reform Act a final and irrevocable settlement of a great constitutional question, and a settlement which no friend to the peace and welfare of the country would attempt to disturb by any means whatsoever. But the Government expressed their readiness to reform real abuses and defects still existing, though they declined to seek 'a false popularity by adopting every fleeting popular impression of the day.' Shortly after the assembling of Parliament in February, 1835, Mr. Gladstone was promoted to the office of Under-Secretary for the Colonies, and in March he brought in a bill for the better regulation of the carriage of passengers in merchant vessels to the Continent

and islands of North America. This bill, which contained many humane provisions, was most favourably received.

For the moment, it seemed as though the Peel Ministry had a long life before it; but the course of politics is proverbially uncertain. Mr. Carlyle asks in his Chartism, 'Are not the affairs of this nation in a bad way? Hungry Greek meets hungry Greek on the floor of St. Stephen's, and wrestles with him and throttles him until he has to cry, Hold! the office is thine.' Fortunately for the reputation of statesmanship, there have been Ministers in every generation who have regarded the public service in a nobler light than this. Of such men was Sir Robert Peel, worthy alike of the esteem of friends and opponents for the uprightness of his character and the singleness of his But although he acceded to office in 1834-5 under apparently favourable circumstances, and although his measures were conceived in no illiberal spirit, his Ministry had a very short lease of power. After sustaining a defeat on the election of Speaker, more serious disaster befell the Government on the Irish Church question. Lord John Russell introduced, on the 30th of March, his resolution, 'That the House should resolve itself into a committee of the whole House to consider of the temporalities of the Church of Ireland.' This motion was met by a direct negative, and a protracted and acrimonious debate ensued.

Mr. Gladstone, in the course of the discussion,

said the result of the motion would be first to enfeeble and debase, and then altogether overthrow, the principle on which the Church Establishment rested. The noble lord invited them to invade the property of the Church in Ireland. The system they were now called upon to agree to was in its essence transitory, and yet it involved the existence of all Church establishments. If the separation of Church and State was hastening on, the present motion, instead of retarding it, would increase its rapidity. 'If in the administration of this great country the elements of religion should not enter-if those who were called upon to guide it in its career should be forced to listen to the caprices and to the whims of every body of visionaries, they would lose that station all great men were hitherto proud of. He hoped that he should never live to see the day when any principle leading to such a result would be adopted in this country.'

On a division Ministers were defeated, the numbers being—For Lord John Russell's motion, 322; against, 289. The Irish Church Bill was subsequently discussed in committee, when Ministers were again defeated on the question of appropriating the surplus funds of the Church to the general education of all classes of Christians. Sir Robert Peel, seeing that he and his Government had no possibility of conducting the affairs of the country with the substantial support of the House, announced his resignation. Lord Melbourne again became Prime

Minimum. Maddinalisation of normal networks to be Univerterminary for the Colonial Legarment, and refined who als which. The field of politics was at this time emorphonous for the littlement of its encounters but Ma. Containing held himself about from mere gialinvalue embeddence, and earned the respect of the whole Monde by his courteous bearing, and the general viruality of his manners.

We saw find the member for Newerk in opunition for a considerable period: but it was improfile for one of his arders temperament and strong contrictions to redrain from taking a deep interest in the various public questions brought forward within the course of the next few years. On the 22nd of March, 1836, Mr. Fowell Buxton rose in the House of Commons to move for the appointment of a committee to inquire into the working of the apprenticeship system in the Colonies, the condition of the apprentices, and the laws and regulations respecting them. The Government, through Hir George Grey, agreed to the appointment of the committee. Mr. O'Connell said that under the apprenticeship system the negroes were worse off sometimes than they were in a state of slavery. Apprenticaship was, in fact, but slavery under another name. Mr. Gladstone replied, and endeavoured to remove the unfavourable impression which had been created against the West Indian body. When he pleaded that many of the West Indian planters were humane men, Mr. Gladstone was undoubtedly right. Having

his nearest relatives directly connected with the traffic so much denounced, he naturally defended their honour when it was assailed. He pointed out that while the evils of the apprenticeship system had been exaggerated, all mention of its advantages had been carefully withheld. Since the passing of the Emancipation Act the condition of the negroes had been gradually improving. He deprecated the attempt made to renew and perpetuate the system of agitation at the expense of candour and truth. The motion, being supported by the Government, was agreed to without a division.

Early in March, 1837, the affairs of Canada came on for discussion in the House of Commons. Lord John Russell proposed a series of resolutions by which it was hoped the breaches which had arisen between Upper and Lower Canada would be healed. These propositions were fiercely attacked, but Mr. Gladstone, amongst others, rallied to the support of the Government. The question that lay before them, he said, was—the support of Government and public order on one side, and the absolutism of the popular will on the other. The difficulty was not between the House of Assembly and the Legislative Council, but between the House of Assembly, and the Crown and Parliament of Great Britain. There was an overwhelming preponderance of opinion in favour of the Government policy.

Mr. Gladstone was also heard in the debate on the Church Rates question. His speech on this

subject occupies thirteen columns in Hansard, though it has apparently escaped the attention of previous writers. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Spring Rice, had propounded a plan for the rearrangement of Church rates, which he hoped would be satisfactory at once to the scruples of Dissenters and the claims of the Establishment. His scheme, in essence, was to take the whole property of the bishops, deans, and chapters out of the hands of those dignitaries, and to vest them in the hands of a commission, under whose improved system of management, it was calculated, that after paying to their full present amount all existing incomes, a sum not less than that assigned by Lord Althorp might be saved, and applied for the purposes of Church rates. When the House went into committee on Mr. Rice's resolutions they were opposed by Sir Robert Peel on financial as well as conscientious grounds. Mr. Gladstone followed in the same strain, and the peroration of his speech—in which he drew a comparison between Rome and England, and insisted upon religion being the basis of the greatness of the State—was, perhaps, the most impassioned specimen of oratory with which he had yet favoured the House. 'It was not,' he said, 'by the active strength and resistless prowess of her legions, the bold independence of her citizens, or the wellmaintained equilibrium of her constitution, or by the judicious adaptation of various measures to the various circumstances of her subject states, that the

Roman power was upheld. Its foundation lay in the prevailing feeling of religion. This was the superior power which curbed the license of individual rule, and engendered in the people a lofty disinterestedness and disregard of personal motives, and devotion to the glory of the republic. The devotion of the Romans was not enlightened by a knowledge of the precepts of Christianity; here religion was still more deeply rooted and firmly fixed. And would they now consent to compromise the security of its firmest bulwark? No Ministry would dare to propose its unconditional surrender; but with the same earnestness and depth of feeling with which they should deprecate the open avowal of such a determination, they ought to resist the covert and insidious introduction of the principle.' When the division came, however, the Ministry obtained a majority of 23, the numbers being—For the resolutions, 273; against, **250.** 

King William IV.—of whom Sir Robert Peel said that 'The reins of government were never committed to the hands of one who bore himself as a Sovereign with more affability, and yet with more true dignity—to one who was more compassionate for the sufferings of others—or to one whose nature was more utterly free from all selfishness'—died on the 20th of June, 1837. A general election ensued, consequent upon the accession of her present Majesty. Mr. Gladstone again came forward for Newark, and was returned. But a curious incident arose in connection

with the representation of Manchester. The Tories of that city, it appears, were extremely anxious to obtain Mr. Gladstone as their candidate, and endeavoured to wean his political affections from the Nottinghamshire borough. 'This must obviously have appeared a very senseless scheme to the cooler men of the party,' said the Manchester Guardian, writing shortly before the election; 'but nothing else presented itself, and they therefore packed off three gentlemen as a deputation on the hopeful errand of inviting Mr. Gladstone. When they met with that gentleman personally we have not learned; but he did not allow them to make a fool of him, and declined the invitation. There, we believe, the matter rests at present; but as the party have raised some money, we suppose they will find some means of spending it.'

This report appears to have been premature, but only premature. The Tories first applied to Mr. Perceval, who declined to stand. Sir H. Hardinge then recommended them to apply to Mr. Gladstone, and subsequently, if he refused, to Sir James Graham, whose chances of success in East Cumberland were considered desperate. Mr. Gladstone was accordingly seen, but he declined to give up a safe seat at Newark to encounter an almost certain defeat at Manchester. The Tories, notwithstanding, determined to put him in nomination, and his name was placed before the electors. These proceedings were unauthorised by Mr. Gladstone, who neither issued an address, nor appeared before the constituency.

A report, however, was speedily current at Newark to the effect that he had agreed to stand for Manchester; and in reply to this, Mr. Gladstone wrote the following address to the electors, dated Clinton Arms, July 22nd, 1837:—'My attention has just been called to a paragraph in the Nottingham and Newark Mercury of this morning, which announces, on the authority of some person unknown, that I have consented to be put in nomination for Manchester, and have promised, if elected, to sit in Parliament as its representative. I have to inform you that these statements are wholly without foundation. I was honoured on Wednesday with a deputation from Manchester, empowered to request that I would become a candidate for the borough. I felt the honour; but I answered unequivocally, and at once, that I must absolutely decline the invitation; and I am much at a loss to conceive how "a most respectable correspondent" could have cited language which I never used, from a letter which I never wrote. Lastly, I beg to state in terms as explicit as I can command, that I hold myself bound in honour to the electors of Newark, that I adhere in every particular to the tenor of my late address, and that I place my humble services during the ensuing Parliament entirely and unconditionally at their disposal.'

The other candidates in the Manchester election were Mr. Mark Phillips and the Right Hon. C. Poulett Thomson. Reports continued to be rife respecting Mr. Gladstone, and it was said that he had

promised to produce £500 towards the election expenses, if returned. His name was taken to the poll contrary to his wishes, and at the nomination he was proposed by Mr. Denison, and seconded by Mr. Gardner. The former enlarged upon Mr. Gladstone's extraordinary talents, and his determination to maintain, firm and indissoluble, the union between Church and State. The show of hands being against the Tory candidate, a poll was demanded on his behalf, which closed as follows:—Thomson, 4,155; Phillips, 3,760; Gladstone, 2,294. The numbers polled for Gladstone were certainly most surprising, considering that he had discountenanced the nomination, that he was never upon the scene, and that the Tories were deprived of the advantage of his great eloquence. The Liberals themselves were astonished at the strength of the Tory vote, alleging (by way of explanation) that their opponents had been most energetic, and had supplied dinners and liquor to about three hundred voters, which had the effect of altering their political principles! The Conservatives, after the election, gave a dinner to their candidate, at the Bush Inn, Manchester.

In responding to the toast of his health, Mr. Gladstone expressed his regret that they should have fought such a contest with so mean a name as his; and that they had the further disadvantage of attacks made on the cause in his absence. 'I have been told,' he said, 'that certain parties in Manchester were pleased to send over to Newark a Radical can-

didate to oppose me. I believe Manchester receives annually from Newark a great deal of useful commodities in the shape of malt and flour; and I suppose it was upon the principle of a balance of trade that this Radical candidate was sent. If instead of sending back this Radical candidate, they had sent back one of their sacks of flour, they would have sent back what was nearly as intelligent, and much more useful.' This sally provoked much laughter. When the speaker resumed, he congratulated the Conservatives of Manchester on the energy which they had manifested, and on their exhibition of a strength which was the nucleus of future success.

The new Parliament assembled on the 20th of October, the young Queen attending in person to open the business of the session. Little progress, however, was made towards the settlement of important public questions before the two Houses were prorogued until the 16th of January.

In the year 1838 the troubles of Canada were still uppermost in the public mind. Lord John Russell introduced a proposal, in the House of Commons, for a bill to suspend for a certain time the existing constitution of Lower Canada, and moved at the same time an address to the Throne, pledging the House to assist her Majesty in restoring tranquillity to her Canadian dominions. Mr. Roebuck was subsequently heard at the bar of the House, on behalf of the Assembly of Lower Canada—after a previous protest by Mr. Gladstone against any acknowledgment by

the House of Mr. Roebuck as agent of the Assembly. On the motion for committing the Government bill, Mr. Hume moved its rejection. A long and very lively debate ensued, in the course of which Mr. Gladstone reviewed the order of events which had led to the existing disasters. He believed that the repeal of the act of 1831—which made over the duties of 1774 to the Assembly—would have prevented the late occurrences. He next examined Lord Gosford's correspondence, and pointed out therein the most glaring contradictions. He concluded his speech by a series of very severe strictures on the incapacity and folly displayed by Lord Gosford and the Colonial Office. The Chancellor of the Exchequer endeavoured to answer the member for Newark, but Sir Robert Peel pronounced his attempt a miserable failure. The House, however, decided upon going into committee on the Government bill by an immense majority.

In this same year, 1838, there was another strong revival of the anti-Slavery agitation. Whether the reports which reached this country concerning the evils of negro apprenticeship were altogether accurate and trustworthy it does not fall within our province to inquire. Suffice it to state, that Lord Brougham, Dr. Lushington, and other eminent anti-slavery advocates, accepting and believing these reports, forthwith, and naturally, acted upon them. By the Emancipation Act slavery had been abolished from the year 1834, but negro apprenticeship was not to terminate until 1840. Basing his justification on the

alleged oppression exercised upon the negroes, Lord Brougham introduced the subject of slavery in the House of Lords, and moved the immediate abolition of negro apprenticeship. His lordship cited many harrowing details of the cruelties practised, and said it could not be denied that attempts had been made to perpetuate slavery in a new form. The motion was unsuccessful. On the 29th of March Sir George Strickland proposed a similar resolution in the House On the second day of the debate, of Commons. Mr. Gladstone delivered a long and powerful speech, but on the side opposed to that of immediate abolition. This address, extending to thirty-three columns in the official reports, is printed from a corrected edition published by Hatchard. The importance thus attached to the speech was admitted further by the press, in whose columns it was very fully discussed. Mr. Gladstone began by saying that when the Abolition Act of 1833 was brought forward, those who were connected with West Indian property joined in the passing of that measure: 'We professed a belief that the state of slavery was an evil and a demoralising state, and desired to be relieved from it; we accepted a price in composition for the loss which was expected to accrue; and if, after these professions and that acceptance, we have endeavoured to prolong its existence and its abuses under another appellation, no language can adequately characterise our baseness, and either everlasting ignominy must be upon us, or you are not

justified in carrying this motion.' But he utterly and confidently denied the charge, as it affected the mass of the planters, and as it affected the mass of the apprentices. By the facts to be adduced he would stand or fall. 'Oh, sir,' he continued, 'with what depth of desire have I longed for this day! Sore, and wearied, and irritated, perhaps, with the grossly exaggerated misrepresentations, and with the utter calumnies that have been in circulation without the means of reply, how do I rejoice to meet them in free discussion before the face of the British Parliament! and I earnestly wish that I may be enabled to avoid all language and sentiments similar to those I have reprobated in others.' He then proceeded to show that the character of the planters was at stake. They were attacked both on moral and pecuniary grounds. The apprenticeship—as Lord Stanley distinctly stated when he introduced the measure—was a part of the compensation. Negro labour had a marketable value, and it would be unjust to those who had the right in it to deprive them of it. Besides, the House had assented to this right as far as the year 1840, and was morally bound to fulfil its compact. The committee presided over by Mr. Buxton had reported against the necessity for this change.

Mr. Gladstone, with great fulness of detail, next examined the relations between the planters and the negroes, and with regard to the cases of alleged cruelty, he showed that they had been constantly and enormously on the decrease since the period of

abolition. He strongly deprecated all such appeals as were made to individual instances and exaggerated representations, and endeavoured, by elaborate statistics, to prove that the abuses were far from being general. The use of the lash, as a stimulus to labour, had died a natural death in British Guiana. During the preceding five months only eleven corporal punishments had been inflicted in a population of seven thousand persons, yielding an average of seven hundred lashes by the year, and these not for neglect of work, but for theft. Towards the close of his speech, Mr. Gladstone thus effectively turned the tables, in one sense, upon his opponents by a tu quoque argument. 'Have you, who are so exasperated with the West Indian apprenticeship that you will not wait two years for its natural expiration,—have you inquired what responsibility lies upon every one of you, at the . moment when I speak, with reference to the cultivation of cotton in America? In that country there are near three millions of slaves. You hear not from that land of the abolition—not even of the mitigation—of slavery. It is a domestic institution, and is to pass without limit, we are told, from age to age; and we, much more than they, are responsible for this enormous growth of what purports to be an eternal slavery . . . You consumed forty-five millions of pounds of cotton in 1837, which proceeded from free labour; and, proceeding from slave labour, three hundred and eighteen millions of pounds! And this while the vast regions of India afford the means of

obtaining, at a cheaper rate, and by a slight original outlay to facilitate transport, all that you can require. If, sir, the complaints against the general body of the West Indians had been substantiated, I should have deemed it an unworthy artifice to attempt diverting the attention of the House from the question immediately at issue, by merely proving that other delinquencies existed in other quarters; but feeling as I do that those charges have been overthrown in debate, I think myself entitled and bound to show how capricious are hon. gentlemen in the distribution of their sympathies among those different objects which call for their application.' The speaker concluded by asking for justice alone, and demanded that the Legislature should not be deaf to that call. With the influence of this vigorous defence of the planters upon it, the House went to a division. Sir George Strickland's motion was lost, the numbers being-Ayes, 215; Noes, 269—majority, 54. The Times newspaper, on the following day, admitted the force of Mr. Gladstone's speech, which, from an oratorical point of view, was completely successful. disposed of many allegations that had been made against the planters, although it did not remove the grounds upon which the anti-Slavery agitation was based, and by which evils it was justified. There were complaints of oppression and exaction which could not be denied, and the House of Assembly in Jamaica had by no means shown its readiness to fulfil that portion of the compact of 1833-4 which devolved

upon it, and by which there had been secured to the West Indian proprietors a sum of twenty millions sterling, with an allowance of six years' apprenticeship.

This speech by Mr. Gladstone on negro apprenticeship, though delivered on the unpopular side of the question, confessedly brought him into the front rank of Parliamentary debaters. Detailed in its facts and fervid in appeal, it was alike successful as an example of strong and vigorous argument, and as an oratorical display. It will be interesting in this place to turn for a moment to a personal sketch of the hon. gentleman, written by one who had ample opportunities for observing him, as he appeared in Parliament during the very session in which the above speech was delivered. 'Mr. Gladstone, the member for Newark,' says this writer,\* 'is one of the most rising young men on the Tory side of the House. His party expect great things from him; and certainly, when it is remembered that his age is only thirty-five, † the success of the Parliamentary efforts he has already made justifies their expectations. He is well informed on most of the subjects which usually occupy the attention of the Legislature; and he is happy in turning his information to good account. He is ready on all occasions which he deems fitting ones with a speech in favour of the policy advocated by the party with

<sup>\*</sup> The British Senate in 1838. By the Author of The Great Metropolis, &c.

<sup>†</sup> Another mistake in Mr. Gladstone's age. He was only twenty-nine at this time.

whom he acts. His extempore resources are ample. Few men in the House can improvise better. It does not appear to cost him an effort to speak.' But by way of showing how dangerous it is to assume the rôle of political prophet, here is a passage from the same pen, which is both somewhat diverting and rather contradictory in spirit to that which has gone before:—'He is a man of very considerable talent, but has nothing approaching to genius. His abilities are much more the result of an excellent education and of mature study than of any prodigality of nature in the distribution of her mental gifts. Ihave no idea that he will ever acquire the reputation of a great statesman. His views are not sufficiently profound or enlarged for that; his celebrity in the House of Commons will chiefly depend on his readiness and dexterity as a debater, in conjunction with the excellence of his elocution, and the gracefulness of his manner when speaking.' What remains to be said now, with regard to the words we have placed in italics, and bearing in mind Mr. Gladstone's financial policy, and his Irish and other legislation? Yet be it remembered that it is the destiny of many critics to propound their theories, and afterwards to retract them, or live to find them falsified. On the question of Mr. Gladstone's style, the same author remarks:-- 'His style is polished, but has no appearance of the effect of previous preparation. He displays considerable acuteness in replying to an opponent; he is quick in his perception of anything vulnerable in the speech

to which he replies, and happy in laying the weak point bare to the gaze of the House. He now and then indulges in sarcasm, which is, in most cases, very felicitous. He is plausible even when most in error. When it suits himself or his party, he can apply himself with the strictest closeness to the real point at issue; when to evade the point is deemed most politic, no man can wander from it more widely.' Mr. Gladstone's talent for amplification has doubtless led the writer in this last phrase to do him an injustice. That which seemed to him an evasion of the question was possibly capable of another explanation, and certainly that which is merely a politic course of action has never been allowed to sway Mr. Gladstone throughout his long public life. He has frequently acted upon impulse—the irresistible impulse of his own convictions. Whether these impulses —generous and sincere as they have ever been—have invariably also been in accord with true political and social progress is a question which has always divided, and will probably continue to divide, public opinion in this country.

Before leaving this part of our subject, we will append, from the writer whose sketches we have just drawn upon, the following personal details respecting Mr. Gladstone and his oratory at this early stage of his Parliamentary career:—

<sup>&#</sup>x27;Mr. Gladstone's appearance and manners are much in his favour. He is a fine-looking man. He is about the usual height, and of good figure. His countenance is mild and pleasant, and has a highly intellectual

expression. His eyes are clear and quick. His eyebrows are dark and rather prominent. There is not a dandy in the House but envies what Truefit would call his "fine head of jet-black hair." It is always carefully parted from the crown downwards to his brow, where it is tastefully shaded. His features are small (?) and regular, and his complexion must be a very unworthy witness if he does not possess an abundant stock of health.

Mr. Gladstone's gesture is varied, but not violent. When he rises he generally puts both his hands behind his back; and having there suffered them to embrace each other for a short time, he unclasps them, and allows them to drop on either side. They are not permitted to remain long in that locality, before you see them again closed together and hanging down before him. Their re-union is not suffered to last for any length of time. Again a separation takes place, and now the right hand is seen moving up and down before him. Having thus exercised it a little, he thrusts it into the pocket of his coat, and then orders the left hand to follow its example. Having granted them a momentary repose there, they are again put into gentle motion; and in a few seconds they are seen reposing vis-à-vis on his breast. He moves his face and body from one direction to another, not forgetting to bestow a liberal share of his attention on his own party. He is always listened to with much attention by the House, and appears to be highly respected by men of all parties. He is a man of good business habits: of this he furnished abundant proof when Under-Secretary for the Colonies, during the short-lived administration of Sir Robert Peel.'

In the year 1839 Mr. Gladstone upon two occasions addressed the House on a topic collateral with that of slavery. He strongly opposed the Jamaica Government Bill, for the suspension of the Constitution, introduced by Sir S. Lushington, characterising it as inconsistent and inexpedient, inasmuch as it would perpetuate the disunion which existed between the different classes of the community. He asserted that it would undermine the confidence of our colonial fellow-subjects throughout the whole circle of our colonial possessions.

The question of National Education being intro-

duced by Ministers in the House of Commons, on the 14th of June, 1839, Lord Stanley delivered a powerful speech against the proposals of the Government, and concluded by moving an amendment to the effect, 'That an address be presented to her Majesty to rescind the order in council for constituting the proposed board of Privy Council.' Lord Morpeth defended the Government proposition. While his lordship held his own views respecting the doctrines of the Roman Catholics, and also respecting the Unitarian tenets, he maintained that as long as the State thought proper to employ Roman Catholic sinews, and to finger Unitarian gold, it could not refuse to extend to those by whom it so profited the blessings of education. After speeches by Lord Ashley, Mr. Buller, Mr. O'Connell, and others—in the course of which allusions were made to Mr. Gladstone's work on Church and State—the member for Newark addressed the House. He would not flinch, he said, from a word he had uttered or written upon religious topics; he claimed the privilege of contrasting his principles and trying their results in comparison with those professed by Lord John Russell, and of ascertaining the effects of both upon the institutions of the country, so far as they operated upon the Established Church in England, Scotland, and in Ireland. Turning upon Mr. O'Connell, who had expressed a great fondness for statistics, Mr. Gladstone said the use he had made of them reminded him of an observation of Mr. Canning's. 'He had a great aversion to hear

of a fact in debate, but what he most distrusted was a figure.' He then went on to prove the inaccuracy of the hon. member's figures. Replying to Lord Morpeth's declaration concerning the duty of the State to provide education for Dissenters so long as it fingered their gold, Mr. Gladstone said that if the State was to be regarded as having no other function than that of representing the mere will of the people as to religious tenets, he admitted the truth of his principle, but not if they were to hold that the State was capable of duties, and that the State could have a conscience. It was not his habit to revile religion in any form, but he demanded what ground there was for confining the noble lord's reasoning to Christianity. Referring to the position held by the Jews upon this Education question, he read to the House a passage from a recent petition, as follows:— 'That your petitioners feel the deepest gratitude for the expression of her Majesty's most gracious wish that the youth of this country should be religiously brought up, and the rights of conscience respected, while they earnestly hope that the education of the people, Jewish and Christian, will be sedulously connected with a due regard to the Holy Scriptures.' Mr. Gladstone asked how was the education of the Jewish people, who considered the New Testament an imposture, to be sedulously connected with a due regard to the Holy Scriptures, which consisted of the Old and the New Testament? To oblige the Jewish children to read the latter would be directly contrary

to the principles of hon. gentlemen opposite. He would have no child forced to do so, but he protested against paying from the money of the State a set of men whose business would be to inculcate erroneous doctrines. At the conclusion of the debate the Government carried their motion by a very small majority. Two years later Mr. Gladstone again spoke on the unpopular side, when he opposed the Jews Civil Disabilities Removal Bill. He was on this occasion answered by Mr. (afterwards Lord) Macaulay in a speech of great point and force. The bill was carried in the Commons, but lost in the Lords.

In the session of 1840 an important debate on the war with China was originated by Sir James Graham, who moved the following resolution:—'That it appears to this House, on consideration of the papers relating to China, presented by command of her Majesty, that the interruption in our commercial and friendly intercourse with that country, and the hostilities which have since taken place, are mainly to be attributed to the want of foresight and precaution on the part of her Majesty's present advisers, in respect to our relations with China, and especially to their neglect to furnish the superintendent at Canton with powers and instructions calculated to provide against the growing evils connected with the contraband traffic in opium, and adapted to the novel and difficult situation in which the superintendent was placed.' On the 8th of April, Mr. Gladstone spoke strongly in

favour of the motion of his friend, Sir J. Graham. If it failed to involve the Ministry in condemnation, they would still be called upon to show cause for their intention of making war upon China. Answering the speech of Mr. Macaulay of the previous evening, Mr. Gladstone said, 'The right hon. gentleman opposite spoke last night in eloquent terms of the British flag waving in glory at Canton, and of the animating effects produced on the minds of our sailors by the knowledge that in no country under heaven was it permitted to be insulted. But how comes it to pass that the sight of that flag always raises the spirit of Englishmen? It is because it has always been associated with the cause of justice, with opposition to oppression, with respect for national rights, with honourable commercial enterprise; but now, under the auspices of the noble lord, that flag is hoisted to protect an infamous contraband traffic, and if it were never to be hoisted except as it is now hoisted on the coast of China, we should recoil from its sight with horror, and should never again feel our hearts thrill, as they now thrill with emotion, when it floats proudly and magnificently on the breeze.' Notwithstanding the eloquence arrayed against them, Ministers obtained a bare majority upon the proposed vote of censure, the numbers being-For Sir J. Graham's motion, 262; against, 271.

The Whig Government, however, which for some time back had been growing very unpopular, was doomed to fall in the following year. Many causes

had combined to render the Ministry obnoxious to the country. They had disappointed both their English Dissenting supporters and their Irish allies; and when the session of 1841 opened, their overthrow was felt to be imminent. In financial matters, their policy had proved a complete failure, and had grievously disappointed the nation. The deficit in the revenue this year amounted to no less a sum than two millions and a half. On all sides it was felt that the government of the country must be committed to stronger hands. Accordingly, on the 27th of May, Sir Robert Peel proposed in the Lower House a resolution to the effect that her Majesty's Government did not sufficiently possess the confidence of the House of Commons to enable them to carry through the House measures which they deemed of essential importance to the public welfare; and that their continuance in office under such circumstances was at variance with the spirit of the Constitution. Mr. Gladstone did not speak in this debate, which extended over five nights. On a division Ministers were in a minority of one. For Sir Robert Peel's motion there appeared 312; against, 311. On the 7th of June, Lord John Russell announced that the Ministry would at once dissolve Parliament, and appeal to the country. Parliament was accordingly prorogued on the 22nd, and the country was speedily in the turmoil of a general election. The results of the new elections were known by the end of July, when it was found that Ministers had been defeated, and that with greater loss than even

the Tories themselves had anticipated. Of the new members returned the Tories had a great majority. The Liberal seats gained by the Tories were seventy-eight in number, while the Tory seats gained by Liberals were only thirty-eight, thus making a difference of eighty votes on a division. Lord Milton and Lord Morpeth were defeated in West Yorkshire, and Lord Howick in North Northumberland. Mr. Gladstone again stood for Newark, where he was returned at the head of the poll, with 633 votes. Lord John Manners became his colleague, with 630 votes; Mr. Hobhouse, the Whig candidate, only polling 394 votes.

Parliament met on the 24th of August, and Ministers were defeated in both Houses on the Address. In the House of Commons, at the close of an animated discussion, the numbers were—For the Ministerial Address, 269; amendment, 360—majority against the Government, 91. Ministers now resigned office, and on the 31st of the month Sir Robert Peel accepted her Majesty's commands to form a Ministry. Mr. Gladstone received from his leader the appointments of Vice-President of the Board of Trade and Master of the Mint. In appearing on the hustings at Newark, he said there were two points upon which the British farmer might rely—the first being that adequate protection would be given to him, and the second that protection would be given him through the means of the sliding scale. There was no English statesman who could foresee at this period the results of that extraordinary agitation which, in the course of the

next five years, was destined to secure the abrogation of the Corn Laws. Before this consummation arrived, Mr. Gladstone was to demonstrate that he not only possessed the arts of a fluent and vigorous Parliamentary debater, but the more solid qualities pertaining to the practical statesman and the financier.

We close this division of the present work by certain references to its subject of a personal and domestic nature. In the month of July, 1839, Mr. Gladstone was married to a lady who is almost as distinguished for her many benevolent and social qualities as Mr. Gladstone is in political and public life. The name of Mrs. Gladstone is widely known as that of a practical philanthropist, while to Mr. Gladstone himself—we may, perhaps, be pardoned for saying—she has ever been that interested sharer in his triumphs and consoler in his defeats, which the late Viscountess Beaconsfield was to his Parliamentary rival. Mrs. Gladstone was Miss Catherine Glynne, daughter of Sir Stephen Richard Glynne, of Hawarden Castle, Flintshire. Their union has been blessed by eight children, all of whom, save one, still survive. Of the four sons, the eldest, William Henry, is a member of the Legislature, and the second, the Rev. Stephen Edward Gladstone, is rector of Hawarden. The third and fourth sons are named Henry Neville Herbert John Gladstone respectively. The former pursues a commercial career. Mr. Gladstone's eldest daughter, Anne, is married to the Rev. E. C. Wickham, M.A., head-master of Wellington College;

the second daughter, Miss Catherine Jessy Gladstone, died in 1850. Two other daughters still survive in addition to Mrs. Wickham, viz., the Misses Mary and Helen Gladstone. As Sir John Gladstone had the pleasure of seeing his son William Ewart a member of the same Senate with himself, so Mr. Gladstone has witnessed his eldest son in turn take his seat in the House of Commons as member for Whitby. Mrs. Gladstone's sister, Miss Mary Glynne, became the wife of Lord Lyttelton, with whom Mr. Gladstone was on terms of the most intimate friendship until his lordship's untoward and lamented death.

## CHAPTER V.

## MR. GLADSTONE ON CHURCH AND STATE.

Mr. Gladstone's Position in the Controversy—His Work on The State in its Relations with the Church—Plan and Analysis of the Treatise—A Defence of the Irish Church—Reasons for a Church Establishment—Macaulay's Criticism upon the Work—Its Defects—Article in the Quarterly Review—Tribute to the Author's Style—Church Principles considered in their Results—Why the Work was undertaken—Its Scope and Objects—A Chapter of Autobiography—Causes of its Appearance—The Author's frank Acknowledgment of a New Departure—Why the Irish Establishment could not be maintained—Mr. Gladstone's Changes of Opinion variously regarded.

We shall now endeavour briefly to indicate Mr. Gladstone's position in the controversy on Church and State. To the perception that the status of the Church, in its connection with the secular power, was about to undergo the severe assaults of the opponents of the Union, was due his first published work, The State in its Relations with the Church. Preparations were already being made for attacking the national establishment of religion; and with all the fervour springing from conviction and a deep-seated enthusiasm, the member for Newark came forward to break a lance in its defence. To the ability with which he did this, even his opponents have testified. Macaulay, in his well-known searching criticism, said, 'We believe we do him no more than justice when we say that his abilities and demeanour have obtained for him the respect and

goodwill of all parties.' Again, 'That a young politician should, in the intervals afforded by his Parliamentary avocations, have constructed and propounded, with much study and mental toil, an original theory on a great problem in politics, is a circumstance which, abstracted from all consideration of the soundness or unsoundness of his opinions, must be considered as highly creditable to him. We certainly cannot wish that Mr. Gladstone's doctrines may become fashionable among public men. But we heartily wish that his laudable desire to penetrate beneath the surface of questions, and to arrive, by long and intent meditation, at the knowledge of great general laws, were much more fashionable than we at all expect it to become.' Many of the positions which Mr. Gladstone assumed in this work have since been abandoned as untenable; but making allowance for the fact that these positions were readily exposed to the attack of the brilliant writer in the Edinburgh Review, it should still be borne in mind that Macaulay's destructive criticism owes much of its force, not to its inherent logic, but to its clever demonstration of the fallacies and weak illustrations of the author.

The treatise is 'inscribed to the University of Oxford; tried and not found wanting through the vicissitudes of a thousand years; in the belief that she is providentially designed to be a fountain of blessings, spiritual, social, and intellectual, to this and to other countries, to the present and future times; and in the hope that the temper of these pages may be found not

alien from her own.'\* Three years after the original publication a fourth edition appeared, revised and considerably enlarged. In his preface to this edition Mr. Gladstone gives the grounds upon which he first undertook the work. In the years 1837 and 1838 a very powerful feeling had been aroused amongst the English people in favour of the national establishment; and as popular feeling does not always discover those forms most closely allied with truth, Mr. Gladstone was afraid of the contingency that the affections thus called into vivid action might content themselves with a theory which teaches, indeed, that the State should support religion, but neither sufficiently explores the grounds of that proposition, nor intelligibly limits the religion so to be supported; and which also seems relatively to assign too great a prominence to that kind of support which taxation supplies. The author anticipates that such a theory would neither guarantee purity of faith, nor harmony nor permanence of operation. Disclaiming all pretensions to an adequate development of the profound and comprehensive question he had essayed to discuss, Mr. Gladstone hoped to do something to meet the need indicated. As he had himself discovered grave faults in abler and earlier writers upon Church and State, he did not complain of the censure passed upon his own work, but set down many of the important misappre-

<sup>\*</sup>An interesting copy of the first edition of this work, containing copious notes by his Royal Highness the Duke of Sussex, will be found in the British Museum. The Duke appears from these notes to have been not only a diligent reader, but an interested critic.

hensions to which it had given rise to his own account. Mr. Gladstone met the prominent objection, that the doctrine of a conscience in the nation or the State implied a tendency towards exclusion, or even persecution, by the following general question:—'What political or relative doctrine is there which does not become an absurdity when pushed to its extremes? The taxing powers of the State, the prerogatives of the Crown to dissolve Parliaments and to create peers, the right of the House of Commons to withhold supplies, the right of the subject, not to civil franchises only, but even to security of person and property,—all these, the plain uncontested rules of our Constitution, become severally monstrous and intolerable when they are regarded in a partial and exclusive aspect.' The opponents of Mr. Gladstone's theories of course answered that the taxation of the State is equal upon all persons, and has for its object their individual, social, and political welfare and safety; but that the taxation of one man for the support of his neighbour's religion does not come within the limits of such taxation, and is, in fact, unjust and inequitable.

It appeared to the author that in an age which leant towards a rigidly ecclesiastical organisation of the State, it was wise and laudable to plead warmly for the rights of the individual conscience; but in an age which seemed inclined to secularise the State, and ultimately to curtail or overthrow civil liberty by the subtraction of its religious guarantees, to declaim against intolerance became a secondary duty, and it

was infinitely more important and more rational to plead earnestly for those great ethical laws under which we are socially constituted, and which economical speculations and material interests had threatened altogether to subvert. While acknowledging still the defects of his work as a treatise upon a portion of political science, he objected to the dictum that no man should write upon a subject of political science until he was so completely master of it as to give it vice simplici a perfect development. He added that the spirit and intention of the book, as well as his view of the principles upon which its whole argument was constructed, remained altogether unchanged.

In his introductory chapter Mr. Gladstone states his special reasons for entertaining the subject, and briefly touches upon the theories of Hooker, Warburton, Paley, Burke, Coleridge, Chalmers, Hobbes, Bellarmine, and others. He quotes the Puritan historian Neal to show that a State may give sufficient encouragement to a national religion without invading the liberties of dissidents. The writer then devotes himself to an examination of the theory of the connection between the Church and the State, treating first of the duty of the State in respect to religion, and, secondly, of the inducements of the State in respect to religion. The third aspect of the question dealt with is the ability of the State in respect to religion. Next we have an elaborate argument on the function of the State in the choice and the defence of the national religion, followed by an examination of the subsisting connection between the State of the United Kingdom and the Church of England and Ireland. The seventh chapter of the work is concerned with the Reformation as relating to the doctrine and practice of private judgment; the eighth deals with the doctrine and practice of private judgment as it is related to the union between Church and State; the ninth furnishes details of the present administrative practice of the State of the United Kingdom; and the tenth and concluding chapter shows the ulterior tendencies of the movement towards the dissolution of the connection.

From the opening chapter of the second volume of this treatise—a chapter treating of the then subsisting connection between the State of the United Kingdom and the Church of England and Ireland—we will quote a passage giving Mr. Gladstone's view at this period of his life upon the relations of the Church as affecting Ireland in particular. This passage not only affords a favourable specimen of the author's style, but it will serve as a landmark, indicating the changes that have taken place in his mind since the time when he thus eloquently expounded principles that have long ago in part been modified, and in part abandoned:—

'The Protestant legislature of the British Empire maintains in the possession of the Church property of Ireland the minisetrs of a creed professed, according to the parliamentary enumeration of 1835, by one-ninth of its population, regarded with partial favour by scarcely another ninth, and disowned by the remaining seven. And not only does this

anomaly meet us full in view, but we have also to consider and digest the fact, that the maintenance of this Church for near three centuries in Ireland has been contemporaneous with a system of partial and abusive government, varying in degree of culpability, but rarely, until of later years when we have been forced to look at the subject and to feel it, to be exempted in common fairness from the reproach of gross inattention (to say the very least) to the interests of a noble but neglected people.

But however formidable at first sight these admissions, which I have no desire to narrow or to qualify, may appear, they in no way shake the foregoing arguments. They do not change the nature of truth and her capability and destiny to benefit mankind. They do not relieve Government of its responsibility, if they show that that responsibility was once unfelt and unsatisfied. They place the legislature of this country in the condition, as it were, of one called to do penance for past offences; but duty remains unaltered and imperative, and abates nothing of her demand on our services. It is undoubtedly competent, in a constitutional view, to the Government of this country to continue the present disposition of Church property in Ireland. It appears not too much to assume that our imperial legislature has been qualified to take, and has taken in point of fact, a sounder view of religious truth than the majority of the people of Ireland, in their destitute and uninstructed state. We believe, accordingly, that that which we place before them is, whether they know it or not, calculated to be beneficial to them; and that if they know it not now, they will know it when it is presented to them fairly. Shall we, then, purchase their applause at the expense of their substantial, nay, their spiritual interests?

It does, indeed, so happen that there are also powerful motives on the other side concurring with that which has here been represented as paramount. In the first instance, we are not called upon to establish a creed, but only to maintain an existing legal settlement, where our constitutional right is undoubted. In the second, political considerations tend strongly to recommend that maintenance. A common form of faith binds the Irish Protestants to ourselves, while they, upon the other hand, are fast linked to Ireland; and thus they supply the most natural bond of connection between the countries. But if England, by overthrowing their Church, should weaken their moral position, they would be no longer able, perhaps no longer willing, to counteract the desires of the majority, tending, under the direction of their leaders (however, by a wise policy, revocable from that fatal course), to what is termed national independence. fear, on the one hand, are therefore bearing up against more immediate apprehension and difficulty on the other. And with some men these may be the fundamental considerations; but it may be doubted whether such men will not flinch in some stage of the contest, should its aspect at any moment become unfavourable.'

Mr. Gladstone thus summarises his chief reasons for the maintenance of the Church Establishment:— Because the Government stands with us in a paternal relation to the people, and is bound in all things to consider not merely their existing tastes, but the capabilities and ways of their improvement; because it has both an intrinsic competency and external means to amend and assist their choice; because to be in accordance with God's mind and will it must have a religion, and because to be in accordance with its conscience that religion must be the truth, as held by it under the most solemn and accumulated responsibilities; because this is the only sanctifying and preserving principle of society, as well as to the individual that particular benefit without which all others are worse than valueless; we must disregard the din of political contention, and the pressure of worldly and momentary motives, and in behalf of our regard to man, as well as of our allegiance to God, maintain among ourselves, where happily it still exists, the union between the Church and the State.'

Macaulay observed that Mr. Gladstone's whole theory in this work rested upon one great fundamental proposition, viz., that the propagation of religious truth is one of the chief ends of government, as government; and he proceeded to combat this theory. Admitting that government was designed to protect our persons and our property, the critic declined to receive the doctrine of paternal government, until some such government should be shown as loved its subjects as a

father loves his child, and was as superior in intelligence to its subjects as a father was to his child. Macaulay then demonstrated, by happy illustrations, the fallacy of the doctrine that every association of human beings which exercises any power whatever is bound, as such an association, to profess a religion. Further, there could be unity of action in large bodies without unity of religious views. Persecutions would naturally follow, or be justifiable, in a society where Mr. Gladstone's views were paramount. No circumstances could be conceived in which it would be proper to establish, as the one exclusive religion of the State, the religion of the minority. The religious instruction which the ruler ought, in his public capacity, to patronise, is the instruction from which he, in his conscience, believes that the people will learn the most good with the smallest mixture of evil. It is not necessarily his own religion that he will select. He may prefer the doctrines of the Church of England to those of the Church of Scotland, but he would not force the former upon the inhabitants of Scotland. These were the objections raised by Macaulay, though he goes on to state the conditions under which an established Church might be retained with advantage. There are many institutions which, being set up, ought not to be rudely pulled down.

In addition to the adverse comments it elicited from eminent Dissenters, the dissertation was dealt with by the *Quarterly Review* from yet another standpoint. Here, the writer remarked that as a necessary

consequence of a profounder philosophy than that of Coleridge and similar thinkers, Mr. Gladstone had taken far higher grounds in his argument than had been occupied by the defenders of the Church for many years. 'He has seen through the weakness and fallacy of the line of reasoning pursued by Warburton and Paley. And he has most wisely abandoned the argument from expediency, which offers little more than an easy weapon to fence with, while no real danger is apprehended; and has insisted chiefly on the claims of duty and truth—the only consideration which can animate and support men in a real struggle against false principles.' The reviewer, nevertheless, manifested considerable divergence from some of Mr. Gladstone's theories, and he observed that a popular Government cannot long maintain a religion which is opposed to the feelings of the nation. If the people of this country combined to attack the Church, the King, Lords, and Commons would be compelled to abandon it. Mr. Gladstone supported this view when, thirty years later, he disestablished the Irish Church. The Quarterly reviewer proceeded to argue that morality in a State cannot be established without religion, that religion should be the object of Government, and that to preserve the Church with the State, the great body of the nation must be brought back to it.

Commenting upon the style in which Mr. Gladstone's first work was written, the same writer eulogised its singular vigour, depth of thought, and eloquence.

Mr. Gladstone 'is evidently not an ordinary character; though it is to be hoped that many others are now forming themselves in the same school with him, to act hereafter upon the same principles. highest compliment which we can pay him is to show that we believe him to be what a statesman and philosopher should be—indifferent to his own reputation for talents, and only anxious for truth and right.' Lord Macaulay observed upon the same question of style, 'Mr. Gladstone seems to us to be, in many respects, exceedingly well qualified for philosophical investigation. His mind is of large grasp; nor is he deficient in dialectical skill. But he does not give his intellect fair play. There is no want of light, but a great want of what Bacon would have called dry light. Whatever Mr. Gladstone sees is refracted and distorted by a false medium of passions and prejudices. His style bears a remarkable analogy to his mode of thinking, and indeed exercises great influence on his mode of thinking. His rhetoric, though often good of its kind, darkens and perplexes the logic which it should illustrate. Half his acuteness and diligence, with a barren imagination and a scanty vocabulary, would have saved him from almost all his mistakes. He has one gift most dangerous to a speculator—a vast command of a kind of language, grave and majestic, but of vague and uncertain import,—of a kind of language which affects us much in the same way in which the lofty diction of the Chorus of Clouds affected the simple-hearted Athenian.' It is

a dangerous and transparent haze, the critic complains, like that through which the sailor sees capes and mountains of false sizes, and in false bearings—more perilous than utter darkness. Mr. Gladstone had of course the faults of rhetoric and of argument almost inseparable from youth, but this vigorous denunciation of his style by Lord Macaulay, accurate as it is in many respects, probably owed some of its point to the critic's antipathy to his theories. As regards the theories themselves, it is not within our province, nor is it our purpose, to defend them. Their propounder, as we shall presently see, has himself in large measure abandoned them.

In 1840 Mr. Gladstone followed up his defence of the union of Church and State, by the publication of another work on a subject nearly related thereto, entitled Church Principles Considered in their Results. This was written 'beneath the shades of Hagley,' and dedicated 'in token of sincere affection' to the author's life-long friend and relative, Lord Lyttelton. In a preliminary chapter Mr. Gladstone points out that periods of reaction and variation may be expected in religion, compatibly with the permanence of the Faith. The Church was at that moment going through a period of transition, the old forms battling with the new. Indicating the course of procedure in his new treatise, he says that he shall attempt, in the first instance, to present a familiar or partial representation of the moral characteristics and effects of those doctrines which are now perhaps more than ever felt in

the English Church to be full of intrinsic value, and which likewise appear to have much special adaptation to the circumstances of the time. These characteristics he defines more particularly to be (leaving out points for the most part minor) the doctrine of the visibility of the Church, of the apostolical succession in the ministry, of the authority of the Church in matters of faith, of the things signified in the sacra-Having dealt with the right of private judgment in his previous work, he should forbear from re-opening that topic. Before coming to his real subject-matter, however, Mr. Gladstone devotes a chapter to Rationalism, endeavouring to define the proper work of the understanding, and also indicating the limits of its province. This the writer understands to be the true view of Rationalism, 'That Rationalism is generally taken to be a reference of Christian doctrine to the human understanding as its measure and criterion. That, in truth, it means a reference of the Gospel to the depraved standard of the actual human nature, and by no means to its understanding, properly so called, which is an instrumental faculty, and reasons and concludes upon the Gospel according to the mode in which our affections are disposed towards it. That the understanding is incompetent to determine the state of the affections, but is, on the contrary, governed by them in respect to the elementary ideas of religion. That, therefore, to rely upon the understanding, misinformed as it is by depraved affections, as our adequate instructor in matters of

religion, is most highly irrational. That, without any prejudice to these conclusions, the understanding has a great function in religion, and is a medium of access to the affections, and may even correct their particular impulses.'

He then proceeds to treat of the Church, the sacraments, the apostolical succession, the specific claim of the Church of England, and Church principles in relation to existing circumstances. With regard to the reconversion of England to Rome—earnestly desired by some—Mr. Gladstone asks, 'England, which with ill grace, and ceaseless efforts at remonstrance, endured the yoke when Rome was in her zenith, and when the powers of thought were but here and there evoked—will the same England, afraid of the truth which she has vindicated, or even with the licence which has mingled like a weed with its growth, recur to that system in its decrepitude which she repudiated in its vigour?' If the Church of England should be worsted, she will be worsted not by an undistinguishing repentance, and a precipitate selfsubmission, a hurrying back to Romanism, 'but by that principle of religious insubordination and self-dependence which, if it refuse her tempered rule and succeed in its overthrow, will much more surely refuse, and much more easily succeed in resisting, the unequivocally arbitrary impositions of the Roman scheme.' Here we have the keynote of many of Mr. Gladstone's utterances in later years upon the subject of Rome, her pretensions and aspirations. Though

frequently charged with drifting towards the Romish Church, that Church has had in some respects no more persistent and consistent opponent. In this matter, he held precisely the same opinions in 1840 and 1870.

It must be admitted, however, coming now to another question, that the surprise evinced by English Protestants was but natural, when one who took so high a view of the duties and privileges of the Established Church became, a generation later, an advocate for the disestablishment of the Irish branch of that Church. That surprise would probably have been less had not Mr. Gladstone written with such eloquence and ability upon the duty of maintaining the Church in Ireland as by law established, for the benefit alike of those who belonged and those who did not belong to her communion. Mr. Gladstone himself felt that some explanation was due of the circumstances which led the author of The State in its Relations with the Church to become the destroyer of the State fabric of the He accordingly published, in 1868, Irish Church. A Chapter of Autobiography. This treatise must be read together with, and by the light of, his early ecclesiastical writings. By this means the great transition which must have been wrought in the author's mind will not seem so strange and harsh. It should be remembered, moreover, that the value of certain principles may, under given circumstances, prove evanescent. They are not eternally and immutably applicable. Founded upon, and deriving their force from, existing conditions of society, when those

conditions radically change they necessarily become effete.

Some reference to Mr. Gladstone's apology for, and defence of, his later conduct in connection with the Church in Ireland, will most fitly come in at this His treatise appeared with the following introduction:—'At a time when the Established Church of Ireland is on her trial, it is not unfair that her assailants should be placed upon their trial too; most of all, if they have at one time been her sanguine But if not the matter of the indictment defenders. against them, at any rate that of their defence, should be kept apart, as far as they are concerned, from the public controversy, that it may not darken or perplex the greater issue. It is in the character of the author of a book called The State in its Relations with the Church that I offer these pages to those who may feel a disposition to examine them. They were written at the date attached to them; but their publication has been delayed until after the stress of the general election.' The author's motives in putting forth this chapter of autobiography were two. First, there was 'the great and glaring change' in his course of action with respect to the Established Church of Ireland, which was not due to the eccentricity or perversion of an individual mind, but to the silent changes going on at the very basis of modern society. Secondly, there was danger that a great cause then in progress might suffer in point of credit, if not of energy and rapidity, from the real or supposed delinquencies of the author.

After citing instances in the present century of what was called political inconsistency on the part of eminent statesmen, Mr. Gladstone claims that we are not at once to jump to the conclusion that public character has been, as a rule, either less upright or less vigorous. He then proceeds to say that the book which was so brilliantly, if not quite fairly, assailed by Lord Macaulay was supposed to have for its distinctive principle that the State had a conscience. But the controversy really lay not in the existence of a conscience in the State, so much as in the extent of its range. 'The work attempted to survey the actual state of the relations between the State and the Church; to show from history the ground which had been defined for the National Church at the Reformation; and to inquire and determine whether the existing state of things was worth preserving and defending against encroachment from quarter. This question it decided emphatically in the affirmative.' Lord Macaulay had added to the main proposition of the work another, to the effect that it contemplated not indeed persecution, but yet the retrogressive process of disabling and disqualifying from civil office all those who did not adhere to the religion of the State. Mr. Gladstone wrote to his hostile critic disclaiming such a conclusion. He had never expressed himself to the effect either that the Test Act should be repealed, or that it should never have been passed. The author had upheld the doctrine that the Church was to be maintained for its

truth, and that if the principle was good for England, it was good also for Ireland. But he denied that he had ever propounded the maxim simpliciter that we were to maintain the Establishment. He admitted that his opinion of the Church of Ireland was the exact opposite of what it had been; but if the propositions of his work were in conflict with an assault upon the existence of the Irish Establishment, they were even more hostile to the grounds upon which it was now sought to maintain it. He did not wish to maintain the Church upon the basis usually advanced, but for the benefit of the whole people of Ireland; and if it could not be maintained as the truth, it could not be maintained at all.

Mr. Gladstone then admits and enlarges upon the fact that, while it was a duty to exhaust every chance on behalf of the Irish Church, it had fallen out of harmony with the spirit and use of the time. And establishments of religion must be judged by a practical rather than a theoretic test. In concluding his Chapter of Autobiography, the author thus puts antithetically the case for and against the maintenance of the Church in Ireland:—'An establishment that does its work in much, and has the hope and likelihood of doing it in more: an establishment that has a broad and living way open to it, into the hearts of the people: an establishment that can command the services of the present by the recollections and traditions of a far-reaching past: an establishment able to appeal to the active zeal of the greater portion of the

people, and to the respect or scruples of almost the whole, whose children dwell chiefly on her actual living work and service, and whose adversaries, if she has them, are in the main content to believe that there will be a future for them and their opinions: such an establishment should surely be maintained. establishment that neither does, nor has her hope of doing, work, except for a few, and those few the portion of the community whose claim to public aid is the smallest of all: an establishment severed from the mass of the people by an impassable gulf, and by a wall of brass: an establishment whose good offices, could she offer them, would be intercepted by a long, unbroken chain of painful and shameful recollections: an establishment leaning for support upon the extraneous aid of a State, which becomes discredited with the people by the very act of lending it: such an establishment will do well, for its own sake, and for the sake of its creed, to divest itself, as soon as may be, of gauds and trappings, and to commence a new career, in which, renouncing at once the credit and the discredit of the civil sanction, it shall seek its strength from within, and put a fearless trust in the message that it bears.'

Such then, very briefly, are the arguments which led the defender of the Irish Church to become its assailant. That a man should change his opinions is no reproach to him; it is only inferior minds that are never open to conviction. On Church questions, Mr. Gladstone must always, and necessarily, have his

opponents and his apologists. The former will urge that having once cherished and expressed the views which he formulated in his early work upon Church and State, he ought never to have abandoned them: the latter will welcome the change that came at an advanced stage in his career, and recognise in it the light of a nobler conviction. Both, we trust, without violence to charity, may yield the eminent statesman credit for the sincerity of his later beliefs, and the honesty of his purpose.

## CHAPTER VI.

## A MEMORABLE DECADE-1841-1850.

Policy of Sir Robert Peel—New Sliding Scale of Corn Duties—Distress and Dissatisfaction in the Country—Corn Law Debates—The Budget of 1842—The Revised Tariff Scheme—Largely the Work of Mr. Gladstone—Lord Howick's Motion on the Distress in the Manufacturing Industry—Mr. Gladstone becomes President of the Board of Trade—Abolition of the Restrictions on the Export of Machinery—Mr. Gladstone on Education—The Railway Bill of 1844—Religious Endowments of Dissenters—Mr. Gladstone's Resignation of Office—The Maynooth Question—Remarks upon recent Commercial Legislation—Repeal of the Corn Laws announced—Mr. Gladstone accepts the Secretaryship for the Colonies—Endorses Sir Robert Peel's Corn Law Policy—Retires from Newark—Mr. Gladstone and Free Trade—Sir Robert Peel's Measure carried—Defeat of the Peel Government—A Whig Ministry —Mr. Gladstone returned for Oxford University—Jewish Disabilities—1848 —A Year of Revolution—Financial Measures of the Government—Mr. Gladstone's Defence of Free Trade—Diplomatic Relations with Rome—Parliamentary Oaths-Speech on the Navigation Laws-The Affairs of Canada-Colonial Reforms—Mr. Gladstone on Agricultural Depression—The Australian Colonies Government Bill—Slavery and the Sugar Duties—State of the Universities—Great Debate on the Foreign Policy of the Government—The Affairs of Greece—Remarkable Speech by Mr. Gladstone—Death of Sir Robert Peel—Disintegration of his Party—Mr. Gladstone and Sir James Graham.

In the brief sitting of Parliament which followed Sir Robert Peel's accession to office in 1841, the Premier was questioned by his opponents as to his future policy. There had been hitherto no indications of this save in the scattered utterances of newly-appointed Ministers appealing for the confidence of their constituencies. Sir Robert Peel naturally declined to state the nature of the measures which he

contemplated maturing in the recess, and claimed the intervening months for the purpose of constructing his political programme. On his motion for a Committee of Supply, on the 17th of September, a lengthened debate ensued on the policy of the past as compared with the new Government. An amendment, moved by Mr. Fielden, to the effect that it was the duty of the House to inquire into the existing distress before voting supplies, was defeated by 149 to 41 votes. Three weeks later Parliament was prorogued by Royal Commission.

The following session, however, was marked by several measures of a high practical character. condition of the country at this time was lamentable; distress and discontent were widely prevalent; and the difficulties of the Government were enhanced by popular tumults. On the 9th of February Sir Robert Peel brought forward his new sliding scale of corn duties in the House of Commons. He proposed that a duty of twenty shillings should be levied when wheat was at fifty-one shillings per quarter, to descend to one shilling when the price was seventy-three, with rests at intermediate prices, intended to diminish the possibility of tampering with the averages. Having detailed the remaining portions of his plan, the Premier said he considered the present not an unfavourable time for discussing the question of the Corn Laws. 'There was no great stock of foreign growth on hand to alarm farmers; the recess, notwithstanding the distress, had been marked by universal calm; there

was no popular violence to interrupt legislation; and there was a disposition to view any proposal for the adjustment of the question with calmness and moderation.' The Minister's view of the national situation was not altogether in accordance with the published facts, for her Majesty even, on her appearance at the London theatres, had been hooted. But Sir Robert Peel's opinion of what was comparative quietude was quickly and rudely disturbed. Great excitement prevailed throughout the country; and, in order to give effect to the popular voice, on the 14th of February, on the motion for the Speaker to leave the chair, preparatory to a discussion in committee on the Corn Laws, Lord John Russell moved as an amendment, 'That this House, considering the evils which have been caused by the present Corn Laws, and especially by the fluctuation of the graduated or sliding scale, is not prepared to adopt the measure of her Majesty's Government, which is founded on the same principles, and is likely to be attended by similar results.'

It fell to Mr. Gladstone to lead the opposition to this motion. He denied that the proposed plan was founded on the same principle as the existing one, except, indeed, as both involved a sliding scale. The existing law was not chargeable with the present mass of distress, which he attributed rather to the unavoidable fluctuation of the seasons. Four successive bad harvests must result in producing high prices of food. He adduced a series of illustrations to show that these

unavoidable fluctuations were not aggravated by the Corn Laws, and he contrasted the working of Lord John Russell's plan with that of Sir Robert Peel, insisting upon the great superiority of the latter. As to the late drains of the currency, he did not believe that they could have been prevented by a fixed duty; they must have followed as the necessary consequence of bad harvests, whatever the rate of import duties had been. A uniform protection could not be given to corn, as it could be to other articles, because at high prices of corn no duty could be maintained; therefore at low prices, it was just to give a duty which would be an effectual protection. 'Between the opposite extremes of those who thought with the Anti-Corn Law Convention, and those who thought with the Agricultural Association of Boston, he believed that the measure of Government was a fair medium; and that it would give relief to consumers, steadiness to prices, an increase to foreign trade, and a general improvement of the condition of the country.'\* The debate which followed was characterised by vigorous speeches from Mr. Roebuck and Lord Palmerston. Lord John Russell's amendment was negatived by a

<sup>\*</sup> See the Annual Register for 1842, and also Hansard's Parliamentary Debates. As the author, in every instance, quotes only from authentic reports of the speeches of Mr. Gladstone and other members of the Legislature, he has not deemed it necessary to burden his pages with foot-notes giving the formal references to pages and columns. In addition to the authorities above-mentioned, he would also acknowledge the valuable aid he has received in regard to dates, facts, and in some instances public addresses, from Irving's Annals of our Time, Maunder's Treasury of History (new edition, edited by the Rev. G. W. Cox), and the daily journals. In every important Parliamentary speech, however, he has relied upon Hansard.

majority of 123, the numbers being—For the amendment, 226; against, 349. By way of contradiction to Sir Robert Peel's statement that the country was tranquil, the Premier himself had the honour of being burnt in effigy during a lively riot at Northampton, and a similar forcible expression of opinion occurred in other towns.

On the 24th, Mr. Villiers—to whose unselfish and untiring efforts on behalf of Free Trade too warm a tribute cannot be paid—brought forward a motion for the immediate repeal of the Corn Laws; but his resolution was lost by the enormous majority of 303, in a House composed of less than 500 members. The Commons had not yet begun to march with the people on this great question. On the 11th of March, the budget was introduced by Sir Robert Peel. There was a deficit, he said, of £2,750,000, and the utmost limit of taxation upon articles of consumption had been reached. He therefore proposed a tax on incomes, calculated to produce £3,700,000; the Irish equalised stamp and spirit duties would give £410,000; and an export duty of four shillings on coal would yield £200,000. The surplus thus obtained he should apply to a reduction of duties in a revised tariff. The budget had for its chief object the taxation of wealth and the relief of manufacturing industry. The income-tax, calculated at 7d. per pound on incomes of £150 and upwards, was to be limited to three years, with a possible extension to five at the discretion of the House. The resolutions upon the income-tax were

carried early in April with very little opposition. Some days later Lord John Russell was defeated, by a majority of 106, in an attempt to overthrow the Government scheme, and a bill founded on these fiscal propositions was subsequently passed.

The second branch of the financial plan of the Government, the revised Tariff or Customs Duties scheme, was a formidable undertaking. Though brought into the House by the Prime Minister, it was understood to be almost wholly the work of his able lieutenant, Mr. Gladstone. Out of some 1,200 duty-paying articles, a total abolition, or a considerable reduction, took place in no fewer than 750 of such articles. Sir Robert Peel's boast, that he had endeavoured to relieve manufacturing industry, was more than justified by this great and comprehensive measure. He had acknowledged, amidst loud cheers from the Opposition, that all were agreed in the general rule that we should purchase in the cheapest market and sell in the dearest; but he added, 'If I proposed a greater change in the Corn Laws than that which I submit to the consideration of the House, I should only aggravate the distress of the country, and only increase the alarm which prevails among important interests.' Mr. Hume, however, hailed with joy the appearance of the Premier and his colleagues as converts to the principles of Free Trade. Mr. Gladstone replied that though it was not worth while now to discuss who were the authors of the principles on which the Government measure was

founded, he must enter his protest against the statement that the Ministry came forward as converts to principles which they had formerly opposed. The late Government had certainly done very little for the principles of commercial relaxation.

Again and again, during the progress of the Tariffs Bill, was Mr. Gladstone called upon to defend the details of the Government scheme. thing was said upon almost every article of consumption included in or excluded from the plan; but it was admitted on all hands that great fiscal reforms had been conceived and executed. No measure with which Mr. Gladstone's name has since been connected more fully attested his mastery over detail, his power of comprehending the commercial interests of the country, or his capacity as a practical statesman in suggesting the best means for relieving the manufacturing industries of their burdens, than the revised Tariff scheme of 1842. Some idea of the strain involved upon him during this session may be gathered from the fact that Hansard records he rose to his feet no fewer than 129 times, in connection with measures before the House, but chiefly touching the provisions of the Tariffs Bill. A writer, by no means favourable to the Tories, says of the session of 1842, 'The nation saw and felt that its business was understood and accomplished, and the House of Commons was no longer like a sleeper under a nightmare. The long session was a busy one. The Queen wore a cheerful air when she thanked her Parliament for their effectual labours.

The Opposition was such as could no longer impede the operations of the next session. The condition of the country was fearful enough; but something was done for its future improvement, and the way was now shown to be open for further beneficent legislation.'\*

But the distress in the country nerved the Corn Law reformers to renewed efforts. Scarcely had the session of 1843 opened, when Lord Howick called for a committee of the whole House to consider the reference in the Queen's Speech to the longcontinued depression of manufacturing industry. Mr. Gladstone opposed the motion, delivering a long speech in rejoinder. Admitting the distress, he said he could assign various causes for it; the country was familiar with the fact, and so was the House, and no good could come from such a motion. The noble lord proposed to renew past and present agitations with tenfold violence, for he had not thought fit to state the measures upon he had depended for the relief of the distress of the country. The Corn Laws were at the root of the matter, and yet there was a difficulty felt how to unite the noble lord and his friends, who were so divided in opinion as to what ought to follow the repeal of the Corn Laws; and he thought it must have been clear that the movement in favour of the fixed duty could not be repeated.

<sup>\*</sup> Harriet Martineau.—History of England during the Thirty Years' Peace.

question between the Government and the Opposition was not really so great as the latter wished to make out. It was simply one as to the amount of relaxation the country could bear in the duties. It was the intention of the First Lord of the Treasury to attain his object 'by increasing the employment of the people, by cheapening the prices of the articles of consumption, as also the materials of industry, by encouraging the means of exchange with foreign nations, and thereby encouraging in return an extension of the export trade; but besides all this, if he understood the measure of the Government last year, it was proposed that the relaxation should be practically so limited as to cause no violent shock to existing interests, such as would have the tendency of displacing that labour which was now employed, and which, if displaced, would be unable to find another field.' Mr. Gladstone proceeded to show that the measure of the previous year had resulted in no great shock to any commercial industry, nor had it displaced English labour. He desired members to ask themselves the question, Whether or not they were in a condition to repeal the Corn Laws without the displacement of a vast mass of labour? He was not prepared to abandon the principle of the Corn Law while the principle of Protection was applied to other articles of com-The speaker also demonstrated the working of foreign duties in neutralising the benefit of greater cheapness of imported commodities as compared with

those produced at home. Alluding to the American tariff, he demanded what better was the British manufacturer if he escaped paying twenty per cent. to British agriculture, and had to pay forty per cent. to the American Government? Foreign countries were not disposed to be taught the true principles of trade. The only question, he repeated, before the House, was one of time and degree. 'That view had been recognised in this country for the last twenty-five years by every Government which had successively held office; there was no one who held office during that period who had not introduced measures in the nature of relaxation of our commercial code. But he must say that the Government to which right hon. gentlemen and noble lords opposite belonged was, of all others, most slack in introducing such measures until the memorable year 1841.'

Sir Robert Peel concluded this debate with an eloquent speech, and Lord Howick's motion was defeated by a majority of 115. The question of the Corn Laws, however, was not suffered to sleep, for on the 16th of May Mr. Villiers moved for a committee of the whole House upon the subject. Mr. Gladstone opposed the motion in a speech devoted rather to details than general principles. His address bristled with facts, and the gist of his argument was that, in the absence both of experiment and of altered circumstances to justify it, a change so soon after the adjustment of the law would be a step

ruinous in itself, and a breach of contract. The motion, nevertheless, was not rejected by so large a majority as in the previous year, the numbers being -For Mr. Villiers's resolution, 125; against, 381. A month later Lord John Russell re-opened the whole subject, whereupon Mr. Gladstone strongly protested against the constant renewal of uneasiness in the country by successive motions of this kind in Parliament. It was unjust not to give a fair trial to the existing law; and he believed that the agriculturists in general, though dissatisfied with present prices, were not dissatisfied with the law. When the division came, the Ministerial majority was found to have again diminished, the numbers being -For Lord John Russell's motion, 145; against, 244. Mr. Gladstone spoke in the same session upon the subject of the Canadian Corn Laws. The Government carried a bill embodying a series of resolutions by Lord Stanley, securing a reduction of the duties on corn imported from Canada. A motion introduced by Mr. Hawes to reduce the duty on foreign sugar, was opposed by Mr. Gladstone on the ground of its tendency to encourage the slave trade, and it was rejected.

Having succeeded the Earl of Ripon as President of the Board of Trade, Mr. Gladstone introduced, in this same session of 1843, a bill for the abolition of the restrictions on the exportation of machinery—a measure of great practical commercial value. The Minister showed that the existing law of William

was really nugatory. It was pronounced by the authorities of the Customs to be impracticable, and was practically evaded. The law had also injured our trade, and increased that of Belgium. The new bill, abolishing the existing law, received the Royal assent before the session concluded.

Though thus engrossed with schemes of practical legislation, Mr. Gladstone found time—as he has, indeed, throughout the whole of his long career—to interest himself in social and educational questions. One of the most forcible of his speeches upon education was delivered at the opening of the Collegiate Institution of Liverpool. He addressed himself first to the general topic, and after discussing its religious aspect, together with its nature and objects, he continued, 'We believe that if you could erect a system which should present to mankind all branches of knowledge save the one that is essential, you would only be building up a Tower of Babel, which, when you had completed it, would be the more signal in its fall, and which would bury those who had raised it in its ruins. We believe that if you can take a human being in his youth, and if you can make him an accomplished man in natural philosophy, in mathematics, or in the knowledge necessary for the profession of a merchant, a lawyer, or a physician; that if in any, or all, of these endowments you could form his mind—yes, if you could endow him with the science and power of a Newton, and so send him

forth,—and if you had concealed from him, or, rather, had not given him a knowledge and love of the Christian faith,—he would go forth into the world, able indeed with reference to those purposes of science, successful with the accumulation of wealth for the multiplication of more, but "poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked" with reference to everything that constitutes the true and sovereign purposes of our existence—nay, worse, worse—with respect to the sovereign purpose—than if he had still remained in the ignorance which we all commiserate, and which it is the object of this institution to assist in removing.'

In the session of 1844 Mr. Gladstone addressed the House on a variety of topics, including Railways, the Law of Partnership, the Agricultural interest, the Abolition of the Corn Laws, the Dissenters' Chapels Bill, and the Sugar Duties. Amendments to the Address were moved on the subject of the Corn Laws, and also with regard to the distress in the country, but both were negatived. Before the session was a week old, Mr. Gladstone had obtained the appointment of a Select Committee to consider the standing orders relating to Railways, with a view to new provisions in future railway bills for the improvement of the railway system. It was universally felt that some improvement in this direction was necessary, and the President of the Board of Trade accordingly introduced his Railway Bill, a measure of great and acknowledged importance, and one

whose beneficial provisions were warmly welcomed by the House. The bill was based on the report of the Select Committee which Mr. Gladstone had obtained. It provided that after the expiration of fifteen years the Board of Trade should be authorised to purchase any of the railways that came within its provisions, at twenty-five years' purchase of the annual devisible profits, not exceeding ten per cent.; but this option of purchase was not to extend to railways in which a revised scale of tolls had been imposed. One of the clauses regulated the conditions upon which third-class trains were to be established; and all future railways were to act upon the provisions of the bill from the commencement of their traffic. The bill also provided that at least one train on every week-day should start from each end of the line to carry passengers in covered carriages for one penny per mile; that the speed of such trains should not be less than twelve miles an hour including stoppages; that they should stop to take up and set down passengers at every station; that half a hundredweight of luggage should be allowed each passenger without extra charge; and that children under three years of age should be conveyed in such trains without charge, and those under twelve at half price. This bill, so salutary in its provisions for the poorer classes, met with considerable opposition in the outset from the various railway companies, but with some modifications it ultimately became law.

One other subject legislated upon this session is

worthy of notice, as showing that at this period Mr. Gladstone's mind was undergoing significant changes in the direction of religious toleration. The Lord Chancellor introduced a bill for confirming the possession of religious endowments in the hands of Dissenters, and arresting such litigations as had recently taken place in the case of the Lady Hewley Charities—originally given by her ladyship to Calvinistic Independents, but which had gradually passed to Unitarians, who were ousted from their benefits. The bill proposed to vest property left to Dissenting bodies in the hands of that religious body with whom it had remained for the preceding twenty years. The measure passed both Houses substantially in its original shape. When it was discussed in the Commons, Mr. Gladstone said that it was a bill which it was incumbent upon the House to endorse. There was no contrariety between his principles of religious belief and those on which legislation in this case ought to proceed. There was a great question of justice, viz., whether those who were called Presbyterian Dissenters, and who were a century and a half ago universally of Trinitarian opinions, ought not to be protected at the present moment in the possession of the chapels which they held, with the appurtenances of those chapels? On that question of substantial justice he pronounced the strongest affirmative opinion. After this speech, there were those who thought, and expressed their hope and belief in words, that the 'champion of Free Trade' would ere long become the advocate of the most unrestricted liberty in matters of religion. Their hope, if sanguine as to its immediate fulfilment, was far from groundless.

Scarcely had Parliament met in 1845 when it became known that Mr. Gladstone had resigned his post in the Ministry. In the course of the debate on the Address he explained his reasons for this step, and set a good deal of speculation at rest by the announcement that his resignation was due solely to the Government intentions with regard to Maynooth College. The contemplated increase in the Maynooth endowment, and the establishment of non-sectarian colleges, were at variance with the views he had written and uttered upon the relations of the Church and the State. 'I am sensible how fallible my judgment is,' said Mr. Gladstone, 'and how easily I might have erred; but still it has been my conviction that, although I was not to fetter my judgment as a Member of Parliament by a reference to abstract theories, yet, on the other hand, it was absolutely due to the public and due to myself that I should, so far as in me lay, place myself in a position to form an opinion upon a matter of so great importance, that should not only be actually free from all bias or leaning with respect to any consideration whatsoever, but an opinion that should be unsuspected. On that account, I have taken a course most painful to myself in respect to personal feelings, and have separated myself from men with whom, and under whom, I have long acted in public life, and of whom

I am bound to say, although I have now no longer the honour of serving my most gracious Sovereign, that I continue to regard them with unaltered sentiments both of public regard and private attachment.' Mr. Gladstone added that he was not prepared to war against the religious measures of his friend, Sir Robert Peel. He would not prejudge such questions, but would give to them calm and deliberate consideration. A high tribute was paid to the retiring Minister, both by Lord John Russell and the Premier. The latter avowed the highest respect and admiration for Mr. Gladstone's character and abilities; admiration only equalled by regard for his private character. He had been most unwilling to lose one whom he regarded as capable of the highest and most eminent services. By an act of strict conscientiousness, Mr. Gladstone thus severed himself from a Ministry in which he had rapidly risen to power and influence. His motives were appreciated by men of all parties, and it was generally predicted that one so useful to the State could not long remain in the position of a private member.

On the second reading of the Maynooth Improvement Bill, the right hon. gentleman fully expressed himself upon the topic then greatly agitating the public mind. In opposition to the feeling out of doors, and to his own deeply-cherished prepossessions, he announced that he was prepared to give his deliberate support to the measure. The question was to a considerable extent new, as the grant, instead of annual,

was to be made permanent; and the college, by being under the care of a Government Board, was to be brought into close connection with the Government. He disclaimed, in the name of the law, the Constitution, and the history of the country, the voting of a sum of money as a restitution to the Roman Catholic Church of Ireland. His support of the measure was based on the feeling that whatever tended to give ease and comfort to the professors of the College of Maynooth, would also tend to soothe and soften the tone of the college itself. found arguments in favour of the measure in the great numbers and poverty of the Roman Catholic people of Ireland, in the difficulty they experienced in providing for themselves the necessaries of life, and in the still greater difficulty which they found in providing for themselves preachers of their own faith, and in procuring means of education for them. He found additional arguments in the inclination to support it exhibited by all the great statesmen on both sides of the House, and in the fact that those who paid the taxes of a country had a right to share in the benefits of its institutions.' opponents of the measure said it had been an experiment of Mr. Pitt's, and that it had signally failed; but he reminded them that the view of Mr. Pitt was, that the Roman Catholic clergy of Ireland should not only be trained in the College of May. nooth, but that they should also have a subsequent provision made for their support. No such provision had been made, and it was unjust to say Mr. Pitt's scheme had failed when it had only been partially tried.

To show how far Mr. Gladstone's views had undergone modification in the course of seven years, we may add that in this speech he went on to observe how that exclusive support to the Established Church was a doctrine that was being more and more abandoned day by day. Mr. Burke considered it contrary to wise policy to give exclusive privileges to a negative creed like that of Protestantism, and to deny all privileges to those who had a positive creed like the Roman Catholic. They could not plead their religious scruples as the reason for denying this grant to the Roman Catholics, for they gave votes of money to almost every Dissenting sect. He hoped the concession now made—which was a great and liberal gift, because unrestricted and given in a spirit of confidence—would not lead to the renewal of agitation in Ireland by Mr. O'Connell. It might be well for him to reflect that agitation was a two-edged weapon. 'The number of petitions which had been laid on the table that evening proved that there was in this country a field open to agitation, opposed to that which he might get up in Ireland. He deprecated agitation on one side and on the other. He trusted that a wiser spirit would preside over the minds of both parties, and that a conviction would spring up in both, that it was a surrender which ought to be

made of rival claims for the sake of peace. Believing the measure to be conformable to justice, and not finding any principle on which to resist it, he hoped it would pass into law, and receive, if not the sanction, at least the acquiescence of the people of England.'

This speech exercised a most favourable effect, owing to its candour, its breadth of view, and its evident desire for conciliation. As the Earl of Arundel remarked, Sir Robert Peel had now the support of every statesman on either side of the House who deserved the name. A little later in the session Government redeemed its pledge to propose a scheme for the extension of academical education in Ireland. This measure, framed upon the same lines as the Maynooth Improvement Bill, was regarded with equal hostility by those who opposed all concessions to the Roman Catholics. Sir James Graham introduced the bill, which was at once the subject of warm debate. Sir Robert Inglis, that most immovable of Conservatives, declared that 'a more gigantic scheme of godless education had never been proposed in any country than that which was now under consideration.' After such a description of a measure which he intended to support, Mr. Gladstone could not remain silent, and in the discussion on the second reading he said that though the measure was imperfect, the question was not whether it was a perfect measure, but whether it was the best which could be devised to meet the

present state of Ireland and its exigencies. thought the Roman Catholic bishops ought to be consulted on the adjustment of the principles and details of the measure, and that a direct diplomatic correspondence with the Court of Rome should be renewed. He entered his emphatic protest against Sir R. Inglis's declaration that the bill was 'a gigantic scheme of godless education.' 'The bill contained a provision for religious education, so far as it was safe to do so; for it provided rooms in each of the colleges for theological lectures, which was an explicit admission of the efficacy of religious education. Nay, more, it provided facilities for the voluntary payment of professors to deliver such lectures. The difficulties besetting the measure would not be insuperable if both parties laid aside their prejudices.' The bill was subsequently carried through the House.

Before the close of this year, Mr. Gladstone published a pamphlet entitled Remarks upon Recent Commercial Legislation. It had been suggested by the expository statement of the revenue from customs, and other papers lately submitted to Parliament. The author dealt in several aspects with the recent reductions of customs duty—showing the proportion of the entire trade which they had affected, the entire amount of revenue surrendered, and the particular results of the reductions on revenue and on trade. He also discussed their results upon domestic producers, and examined the policy of these financial

measures with special reference to the recent proceedings of foreign Powers in matters of trade. His general conclusion was that English statesmen should use every effort to disburden of all charges, so far as the law was concerned, the materials of industry, and thus enable the workman to approach his work at home on better terms, as the terms on which he entered foreign markets were altered for the worse against him. With a few more years of experimental instruction, such as that afforded by the figures of the statement he had given of the relative growth of British trade with Europe and the world, such results could not fail to exercise a powerful influence on the intelligence and the will of governments, and of the nations whom they ruled.

These ideas were speedily to receive a nobler and a fuller acceptance and expansion. On the 4th of December, 1845, the Times announced that Parliament would be summoned for the first week in January, and that the Royal Speech would recommend an immediate consideration of the Corn Laws, preparatory to their total repeal. This startling news took the other daily journals by surprise, and several of them gave it the most direct and positive contradiction. The original announcement, however, was speedily confirmed. The hour had come, and the Corn Laws were doomed. Mr. Gladstone, though unable to mingle in the debates in Parliament during this last episode of a great struggle, was in thorough harmony with the policy of Sir Robert Peel. His in-

vestigations and financial experiments for some years back had been tending in this direction, though—with one brought up in the rigid school of Protection—a complete reversal of past policy, and the acceptance of an entirely new commercial régime, could not be the work of a moment. But the time came when he could no longer resist the arguments in favour of Free Trade, and he at once announced his changed convictions. As upon many other occasions in his history, his attitude on the question of the Corn Laws led to the severance of long and closely-cherished political and personal friendships.

Sir Robert Peel having been informed by Lord Stanley and the Duke of Buccleuch that they could not support a measure for the repeal of the Corn Laws, and being doubtful whether he could conduct the proposal to a successful issue, felt it his duty to tender his resignation to her Majesty. Lord John Russell was accordingly summoned to form a Ministry; but failing in this, the Queen desired Sir Robert Peel to withdraw his resignation. That statesman resumed office, and when the list of the restored Peel Cabinet was made known, it was found that Mr. Gladstone had accepted the post of Colonial Secretary, in the room of Lord Stanley.

Mr. Gladstone's acceptance of office in a Ministry pledged to the repeal of the Corn Laws led to his retirement from the representation of Newark. The Duke of Newcastle was an ardent Protectionist, and could not sanction the candidature of a supporter of

Free Trade principles. His patronage was therefore of necessity withdrawn from Mr. Gladstone: but, unless his action could have been endorsed by the constituency, the latter would naturally have felt homeourable scruples in continuing to represent, merely under the friendship and influence of the Duke, a homough for which he had so long sat upon opposite principles.

The new Minister accordingly issued his retiring address to the electors of Newark, which is dated January 5th, 1846. Its chief paragraph runs thus:— 'By accepting the office of Secretary of State for the Colonies, I have ceased to be your representative in Parliament. On several accounts I should have been pseuliarly desirous at the present time of giving you an opportunity to pronounce your constitutional judgment on my public conduct, by soliciting at your hands a renewal of the trust which I have already received from you on five successive occasions, and held during a period of thirteen years. But as I have good reason to believe that a candidate recommended to your favour through local connections may ask your suffrages, it becomes my very painful duty to announce to you on that ground alone my retirement from a position which has afforded me so much of honour and of satisfaction.' The right hon. gentleman further goes on to explain that he accepted office because he held that 'it was for those who believed the Government was acting according to the demands of public duty to testify that belief, however limited

their sphere might be, by their co-operation.' He had acted 'in obedience to the clear and imperious call of public obligation.' An exile from Newark, Mr. Gladstone remained without a seat in the House during the ensuing session; and to this fact is to be attributed the lack of his powerful personal advocacy of the great Government measure of that memorable year.

It is no secret that the most advanced statesman on the Free Trade question in the Peel Cabinet was Mr. Gladstone. The policy of the Government in regard to the great measure of 1846 was largely moulded by him, and his representations of the effects of Free Trade on the industry of the country and the general well-being of the people, strengthened the Premier in his resolve to sweep away the obnoxious Corn Laws. The pamphlet on recent commercial legislation had prepared the way for the later momentous changes; and to Mr. Gladstone is due much of the credit for the speedy consummation of the Free Trade policy of the Peel Ministry. In the official sphere he may be regarded, perhaps, as the leading pioneer of the movement.

But that terrible calamity in Ireland—the failure of the potato crop—had furnished a final argument in the mind of Sir Robert Peel for the abolition of Protection. With the prospect of famine in Ireland—and such a famine as had never been experienced in that island—the Premier saw clearly that the time had come when corn must be admitted into the

country free of duty. Moreover, the Anti-Corn Law League was becoming a powerful and irresistible body, while many influential landlords, both in Great Britain and Ireland, who did not belong to the League, were prepared to extend to Sir Robert Peel their hearty support. The friends of Protection, knowing that the personal power of the Premier was greater, perhaps, than that of any other Minister who has virtually governed this empire, opposed the repeal by every means at their command, legitimate or otherwise. Happily, their efforts were doomed to be frustrated. The question whether Peel ought to have left the passing of a Corn Law Repeal Bill to the Liberals is out of the sphere of practical politics. Free Trade had by no means received the support of every member of the Liberal party, even up to so late a date as the year preceding that in which it became an actuality; and Sir R. Peel was placed in a peculiarly favourable position for carrying the measure. Mr. Cobden wrote at this juncture that the Premier had the power, and that it would be disastrous for the country if he hesitated.

But this great Minister did not hesitate. He felt that a crisis had arrived, and he determined to grapple with it. His duty to the country at this period was higher and greater than any fancied loyalty to party. Accordingly, when Parliament assembled, he entered into a detailed explanation of the late Ministerial crisis, and unfolded his proposed measures. The failure of the potato crop, he said, had led to the dissolution of the late Government, and matters now could brook no further delay. immediate decision required to be taken on the subject of the Corn Laws; but while the calamity in Ireland had been the immediate cause of his determination, he could not withhold the homage due to the progress of reason and of truth, and frankly confessed that his opinions on the subject of Protection had undergone a great change. The experience of the past three years had confirmed him in his new opinions, and he could not conceal the knowledge of his convictions, however much it might lay him open to the imputation of inconsistency. Though he had been accused of apathy and neglect, he and his colleagues were even then engaged in the most extensive and arduous inquiries into the true condition of Ireland. As these inquiries had proceeded, he had been driven to the conclusion that the protective policy was unsound, and consequently untenable.

Mr. Gladstone had rendered conspicuous service in these inquiries, as well as in other investigations of a general character which led to the Premier's determination. But it is instructive to note his rival's attitude at this juncture. Speaking in the House of Commons, Mr. Disraeli said, 'To the opinions which I have expressed in this House in favour of Protection I adhere. They sent me to this House, and if I had relinquished them I should have relinquished my seat also.' It would be an unprofitable task to unravel the many inconsistencies of Lord Beaconsfield's career;

but with regard to this present deliverance upon Protection, the curious in such matters may turn back to the records of 1842, when they will discover that at that time he was quite prepared to advocate measures of a Free Trade character. But we must pass on from this important question of the Corn Laws, with the angry controversy to which it gave rise. Sir Robert Peel brought forward his measure, and, after lengthened debates in both Houses, it became law, and grain was admitted into English ports under the new tariff.

Having carried their important Corn Law Repeal scheme, Sir Robert Peel and his colleagues were doomed to fall upon an Irish question. The very day which witnessed the passing of the Corn Law Repeal Act in the House of Lords, saw the defeat of the Ministry in the House of Commons on their bill for the suppression of outrage in Ireland. Being in a minority of 73, Sir Robert Peel tendered his resignation; whereupon Lord John Russell was sent for, and he succeeded in forming a Whig Ministry.

It was not until the brief session in the autumn of 1847 that Mr. Gladstone again appeared in the House of Commons. On the 23rd of July the Queen had dissolved Parliament in person. The succeeding elections turned in many notable instances upon ecclesiastical questions, and more especially upon the Maynooth grant. Mr. Gladstone was brought forward for Oxford University. Sir R. H. Inglis was admitted to have a safe seat, so that the contest lay between Mr. Glad-

stone and Mr. Round. The latter candidate was of the ultra-Protestant and Tory school. The contest excited the keenest interest, and was expected on all hands to be very close. Mr. Gladstone, in his address to the electors of his Alma Mater, confessed that when he entered Parliament, and for many years after, he had struggled for the exclusive support of the national religion by the State, but in vain. The timewas against him. 'I found that scarcely a year passed without the adoption of some fresh measure involving the national recognition, and the national support, of various forms of religion, and in particular that a recent and fresh provision had been made for the propagation from a public chair of Arian or Socinian The question remaining for me was, doctrines. whether, aware of the opposition of the English people, I should set down as equal to nothing, in a matter primarily connected not with our own but with their priesthood, the wishes of the people of Ireland; and whether I should avail myself of the popular feeling in regard to the Roman Catholics for the purpose of enforcing against them a system which we had ceased by common consent to enforce against Arians a system, above all, of which I must say that it never can be conformable to policy, to justice, or even todecency, when it has become avowedly partial and one-sided in its application.' This address intensified the resolve of a section of the electors to defeat Mr. Gladstone. A great portion of the press, however, was in his favour. Several influential journals.

were very satirical upon Mr. Round, and eulogistic of Mr. Gladstone. They praised the earnest attachment of the latter to the Church, and spoke of his distinguished talent and industry. He had relaxed the exclusiveness of his politico-ecclesiastical principles, and no longer called on the Legislature to ignore all forms of religion but those established by law, or which were exactly coincident with his own belief. 'His election (said the Times), unlike that of Mr. Round, while it sends an important member to the House of Commons, will certainly be creditable, and may be valuable to the University; and we heartily hope that no negligence or hesitation among his supporters may impede his success.' The election was regarded with great interest by those outside the pale of the Church. The nomination took place on the 29th of July. The ceremony having been completed, the voting commenced in the Convocation-house, which was densely crowded. We learn from the local journals that more than one gentleman was carried out in a fainting state, so great was the pressure. Many distinguished men (including his political leader) came from a great distance to plump for Mr. Gladstone. At the close of the poll, the numbers were—Inglis, 1700; Gladstone, 997; Round, 824. To the supporters of Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Round, however, must be added 154 pairs. The total number of those polled exceeded that registered at any previous election.

Probably the one feature of this general election

which excited the widest popular comment was the return of Baron Rothschild for the City of London. There was nothing illegal in the election of a Jew, but the statutory declaration required of him virtually precluded him from taking his seat in the House of To obviate this difficulty, Lord John Russell proposed, shortly after the meeting of Parliament, a resolution affirming the eligibility of Jews to all functions and offices to which Roman Catholics were admissible by law. Sir R. H. Inglis opposed the motion, which was supported by his colleague Mr. Gladstone. The latter inquired whether there were any grounds for the disqualification of the Jews which distinguished them from any other classes in the community. With regard to the stand now made for a 'Christian Parliament,' the present measure did not make a severance between politics and religion; it only amounted to a declaration that there was no necessity for excluding a Jew, as such, from an assembly in which every man felt sure that a vast and overwhelming majority of its members would always be Christian. It was said that by admitting a few Jews they would un-Christianise Parliament; that was true in word, but not in substance. He had no doubt that the majority of the members who composed it would always perform their obligations on the true faith of a Christian. It was too late to say that the measure was un-Christian, and that it would call down the vengeance of heaven. When he opposed the last law for the removal of Jewish disabilities,

he foresaw that if we gave the Jew municipal, magisterial, and executive functions, we could not refuse him legislative functions any longer. 'The Jew was refused entrance into that House because he would then be a maker of the laws; but who made the maker of the law? The constituencies; and into these constituencies we had admitted the Jews. Now, were the constituencies Christian constituencies? If they were, was it probable that the Parliament would cease to be a Christian Parliament?' Mr. Gladstone admitted the force of the prayer in Archdeacon Wilberforce's petition, that in view of this concession measures should be taken which would give greater vigour to the Church, and thus operate to the prevention of an organic change in the relations between Church and State. Concluding his defence of Lord John Russell's motion, he was of opinion that if they admitted Jews into Parliament, prejudice might be awakened for a while, but the good sense of the people would soon allay it, and members would have the consolation of knowing that in a case of difficulty they had yielded to a sense of justice, and by so doing had not disparaged religion or lowered Christianity, but had rather elevated both in all reflecting and wellregulated minds.

The logic of this speech could not be controverted, though Mr. Newdegate declared that Mr. Gladstone would never have gained his election for the University of Oxford had his sentiments on the Jewish question been then known. Lord John Russell's mo-

tion was carried by a large majority, whereupon he announced first a resolution, and then a bill, in accordance with its terms.

The year 1848 was a year of agitation and revolution. Europe was in a state of perturbation, and in France was effected one of those national surprises which have been so frequent and so prominent a feature of her political history. The news of the revolution across the Channel caused the greatest excitement in England, and it became the signal for disturbances in the metropolis. On the 6th of March, demonstrations took place at Trafalgar Square and Charing Cross, but, as in the case of more recent émeutes, the mass meetings assumed more of a burlesque than of a serious character. In the provinces, however, and especially at Glasgow, the riots bore a different complexion. Shops were sacked, and at length the military were compelled to fire with fatal effect upon the mob. There were risings of a less formidable nature at Manchester, Edinburgh, Newcastle, and other places. 13th, a Chartist meeting was held on Kennington Common, but although this meeting had been looked forward to with grave apprehensions by all lovers of law and order, it proved by no means so serious an affair as had been anticipated. Great preparations were made in view of the demonstration, which fortunately passed off without loss of life. Those who were politically concerned in it were few in number, but, as is usual in such cases, the meeting had furnished a pretext for the assembling of a lawless mob. Special constables in great numbers were sworn in previous to this notorious demonstration; and it is interesting to note that amongst those who hastened in London to enrol themselves as preservers of the public peace were Prince Louis Napoleon, the Duke of Norfolk, Edward Geoffrey Stanley (Earl of Derby), and William Ewart Gladstone.

Meanwhile, the Government of the country was becoming unpopular—not, it must fairly be said, from any grave faults of its own, apart from the nature of its financial measures. There was a deficiency in the national accounts of upwards of two millions. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in introducing his budget, said that although they might expect an improvement in income, and a diminution of the expenditure caused by the Caffre War, a temporary increase of taxation would be necessary. He therefore proposed that they should continue the income-tax, which would expire in the following April, for five years, and increase its amount from sevenpence to one shilling in the pound. consequence of the distress in Ireland, he did not propose to extend this proposition to that branch of the United Kingdom. The property tax he proposed on exactly the same principles as Mr. Pittprinciples upon which it was also imposed and defended in 1842 by Sir Robert Peel. The Ministerial scheme was severely criticised, and the depressed state of the finances was attributed by many members to the operations of Free Trade. In the course of the debate which followed, Sir Robert Peel recapitulated the circumstances under which his income-tax had originated, and said he should give his decided support to the Ministerial proposition for three years. ' He had been alarmed by the great increase of expenditure, and while assenting to this proposal, he trusted that there would be no relaxation in conducting the most searching investigations. Mr. Disraeli denied the success of Sir Robert Peel's policy, and described himself as 'a free-trader, but not a freebooter of the Manchester school.' In a clever phrase, he dubbed the blue-book of the Import Duties Committee 'the greatest work of imagination that the nineteenth century has produced.' The Government, by acting upon it, and taking it for a guide, resembled, he said, a man smoking a cigar on a barrel of gunpowder.

Mr. Disraeli's epigrammatic speech brought up Mr. Gladstone. Premising that he could not hope to sustain the lively interest created by the remarkable speech of his predecessor—a display to which he felt himself entirely unequal—he would pass over the matters of a personal description touched upon by the hon. gentleman, and confine himself to defending the policy which had been assailed. By a series of elaborate statistics, Mr. Gladstone then demonstrated the complete success of Sir Robert Peel's policy. The confidence of the public would be much shaken on that occasion by an adverse vote. In his conclud-

ing observations, the speaker introduced a reference to the unsettled condition of affairs upon the Continent. 'I am sure,' said Mr. Gladstone, 'that this House of Commons will prove itself to be worthy of · the Parliaments which preceded it, worthy of the Sovereign which it has been called to advise, and worthy of the people which it has been chosen to represent, by sustaining this nation, and enabling it to stand firm in the midst of the convulsions that shake European society; by doing all that pertains to us for the purpose of maintaining social order, the stability of trade, and the means of public employment; and by discharging our consciences, on our own part, under the difficult circumstances of the crisis, in the perfect trust that if we set a good example to the nation—for whose interests we are appointed to consult—they, too, will stand firm as they have done in other times of almost desperate emergency; and that through their good sense, their moderation, and their attachment to the institutions of the country, we shall see these institutions still exist, a blessing and a benefit to posterity, whatever alarms and whatever misfortunes may unfortunately befall other portions of civilised Europe.' It was fortunate for the future interests of the country that the proposals of the Government were at this juncture supported by a great majority of the House of Com-In a moment of unreasoning panic, there was some danger of the adoption of a reactionary policy -a step that would have lost to the country those

blessings which it subsequently enjoyed, as the outcome of Free Trade.

Mr. Gladstone delivered during this session an important speech upon the Navigation Laws. 15th of May, Mr. Labouchere, President of the Board of Trade, propounded the Ministerial plan for the modification of these laws. After taking a lengthy survey of previous legislation on the subject, he announced the alterations contemplated. Reserving the coasting trade and fisheries of Great Britain and the colonies, it was proposed to strike out of the Statute Book altogether the present system, and 'to throw open the whole navigation of the country, of every sort and description.' The Queen, however, retained the right of putting such restriction on the navigation of foreign countries as she might think fit, if those countries did not meet us on equal terms. Each colony should be allowed, if it were deemed advisable, to pass an Act throwing open its coasting trade to foreign countries. The Government contemplated the formation of a new department of the Board of Trade, to be called the Department of the Mercantile Marine, which should consist of unpaid officers, and be presided over by a Lord of the Admiralty.

These proposals were opposed by Lord George Bentinck, Lord Ingestre, and others; and on the 29th Mr. Herries brought forward a resolution in favour of maintaining the fundamental principles of the Navigation Laws. It was during the debate upon this resolution that Mr. Gladstone delivered his lengthy speech, examining closely the operation of the existing laws, and showing the necessity for their repeal. A seasonable time, he said, had arrived for making the necessary alterations, though he did not think the Government proposals in every respect unexceptionable. It would have been better to have proceeded by more gradual measures. With regard to the discretionary power to be lodged in the Queen in Council, with a view of enforcing reciprocity, Mr. Gladstone said, 'I confess it appears to me, there is a great objection to conferring such a power as that which is proposed to be given to the Queen in Council.' On the whole, the Government would have acted more safely and wisely by undoing the legislation of the past in a gradual and piecemeal manner, than by introducing a measure of such a sweeping character. The policy of excluding the coasting trade from the measure he also condemned; it would have been much more frank to have offered to admit the Americans to our coasting trade if they would admit us to theirs. If England and America concurred in setting an example to the world, he hoped that we should 'live to see the ocean, that great highway of nations, as free to the ships that traverse its bosom, as the winds that sweep it. England would then have achieved another triumph, and have made another powerful contribution to the prosperity of mankind.'

Although the Government obtained a large ma-

jority upon this question, so many delays occurred in prosecuting the bill founded on the Ministerial proposals, that it was eventually postponed till the following year.

In the session of 1848, Mr. Gladstone further addressed the House on the proposed grant of Vancouver's Island to the Hudson's Bay Company. He felt justified in saying that the island was a most valuable possession, and a fair opportunity ought to be afforded for its free colonisation. Certainly the Hudson's Bay Company could not be expected to rear that, to the very life and substance of which it was opposed. There was a great opportunity of planting a society of Englishmen, which, if it did not afford a precise copy of our institutions, might still present a reflex of the truth, integrity, and independence which constituted at that moment the honour and glory of this country. Mr. Gladstone also spoke several times in the course of the debates upon the Sugar Duties Bill; but perhaps the most noteworthy speech of the session was that which he delivered upon the measure to legalise diplomatic relations with the Court of Rome.

Strong objections were made against recognising the spiritual governor of Rome, and of all the Roman Catholic population of the world; and it was said that the bill would neither conciliate the affections of the Protestants, nor satisfy the wishes of the Roman Catholics, who had denounced it strongly to the Pope. Mr. Gladstone dealt with the question in a broad and

comprehensive manner. Although there were several reasons, he urged, why it was painful to him to support this bill, he felt he could not oppose its principle. It was unfortunate that they were called upon to debate the question at that moment, when, looking to the state of affairs in Italy, the whole of the subject-matter in dispute would probably have passed away in a short time. England must stand upon one of two grounds. If she declined political communication with the See of Rome, she had no right to complain of any steps which the Pope might take with respect to the administration of his own ecclesiastical affairs; but an act so directly in contravention of the laws of the land as the partitioning of the country into archbishoprics and bishoprics was a most unfortunate proceeding; not only because it was generally and justly offensive to the feelings of the people of England, and totally unnecessary, as he believed, for Roman Catholic purposes, but also because it ill assorted with the grounds on which the Parliament was invited by the present bill to establish definite relations with the See of Rome. Although he could not decline to vote for the second reading, he thought the Government ought to have postponed the measure until the following session. For one hundred years after the Reformation the Pope was actually in arms for the purpose of recovering by force his lost dominion in this country. It was only natural, therefore, that we should have prohibited relations with the See of Rome when it attacked the title of the

Sovereign of these realms; but there was no such reason for continuing the prohibition at the present moment. There was, moreover, an inevitable necessity for a bill of this kind; for the enactment of the Irish Colleges Bill had rendered it absolutely imperative for the Government to consult with the Roman Catholic authorities as to the statutes by which they were to be governed. It followed that if we had to communicate with the Roman Catholic authorities, we must have to communicate with the Pope, for a valid obligation could not be made with the Court of Rome without communication with the Pope himself. It was perfectly right and proper that such communication should be direct and avowed instead of being clandestine. He could not look to the state of Ireland and recollect that there were men in that House charged with the maintenance of peace in Ireland, and refuse to give them any aid not illegitimate which they might wish to make available for this great purpose. He would not from any fear of being misapprehended, and of being thought to entertain views regarding future schemes—which he would leave to be dealt with when their time of ripeness came—he would not, from any such considerations, withhold his support from this measure.

Ten years before, the speech whose gist we have just given—or at least the exposition of the latter portion of its arguments—would have been an impossibility with Mr. Gladstone. But to close observers of the changes being gradually wrought in

his convictions upon ecclesiastical questions, it would have added one more straw indicating the direction of the current. Early in the succeeding session another example was furnished of his liberalising tendencies in matters of conscience.

Lord John Russell having moved that the House of Commons resolve itself into a committee on the oaths to be taken by members of the two Houses of Parliament, with a view to further relief upon this subject, Mr. Gladstone rose and said that he should not shrink from stating his opinion thereon. He was deliberately convinced that the civil and political claims of the Jew to the discharge of civil and political duties ought not, in justice, to be barred, and could not beneficially be barred because of a difference in religion. there were sufficient grounds for going into committee independent of this main purpose. Oaths, when taken by large masses of men, and under associations not very favourable to solemn religious feelings, had a tendency to degenerate into formalism. Nor could he say that the present oaths had no words in them which could not with advantage be omitted. At the same time he was glad that the noble lord had retained the words 'on the true faith of a Christian' in respect to all Christian members of that House. The measure now brought forward should have his support at every stage.

In a subsequent debate upon Church rates, while opposing an abstract resolution on the subject, he said that he felt as strongly as any one the de-

sirableness of settling this question, if they could do The evils attending the existing system were enormous, and we had certainly deviated in practice from the original intention of the law, which was not to impose a mere uncompensated burden upon any man, but a burden for which every man bearing it should receive a benefit; so that while each member of the community was bound to contribute his quota to the Church, every member of the Church was entitled to go to the churchwardens and demand a free place to worship his Maker in the house of that Maker. The case at present was, and above all in towns, that the centre and best parts of the church were occupied by pews exclusively for the middle classes, while the labouring classes were jealously excluded from almost every part of sight and hearing in the churches, and were treated in a manner which was most painful to reflect upon. Matters being in this unsatisfactory condition, they were bound to give consideration to proposals for relief. While voting against any and every abstract resolution, he would not oppose the introduction of a bill dealing with the question, but was at any time prepared to consider such a measure, though he might not be able to give it his approval.

The Ministerial bill for the repeal of the Navigation Laws was re-introduced by Mr. Labouchere. During the debate on the second reading of this measure—one of the most important of the session of 1849—Mr. Gladstone supported generally the Govern-

ment proposals in a remarkably full and exhaustive He dwelt upon the beneficial effects which had already resulted from a system of relaxation as regarded the Navigation Laws. So far from this relaxation being destructive to our shipping, the total tonnage had been steadily increasing. After pointing out the compensations which the shipowner might fairly demand from the Legislature on being deprived of protection, Mr. Gladstone said he had never entertained the notion that we should proceed in this matter by treaties of reciprocity with foreign Powers. adopting a policy of conditional relaxation they would avoid the dangers besetting a system of reciprocity. Conditional relaxation would give to the vessels of such states as conferred privileges upon our shipping corresponding advantages in our ports. He considered that this plan had the advantage over that proposed by the Government; it was in accordance with precedent and experience, was demanded by justice, and would be found much more easy of execution. If the Government would not consent to legislate on the subject conditionally, he would advise it to do so directly, without the accompaniment of retaliation. This plan would do more for the general liberty of commerce than that which emanated from the Treasury Bench. He also regarded the Government proposition upon the coasting trade as defective, and prophesied that it would be found ineffectual. Before we could expect to get the boon of the American coasting trade, we must throw our own coasting trade unreservedly open to that country. He was aware that the Colonies were supposed to want an unconditional repeal of the Navigation Laws; but they did not want such a repeal with a reserved power of retaliation. Having once tasted the sweets of unrestrained commercial intercourse with the whole world, the Colonies would not be very ready to return to the system of restriction, either wholly or partially, should that system be reverted to by the mother-country, either in whole or in part, by the exercise of the power of retaliation. Gladstone therefore submitted to the Government the propriety of erasing this feature from its plan, if it was resolved to proceed upon the principle of unconditional legislation. Another flaw in the Government scheme was the contemplated removal of the intercolonial trade and the direct trade between the Colonies and foreign states from beyond the jurisdiction of Parliament. Yet, notwithstanding these defects, the speaker could not refuse his assent to the second reading of the bill. Mr. Gladstone concluded by referring to the fears and alarms expressed by the Marquis of Granby at the consequences which might arise from a change in the Navigation Laws. noble Marquis,' he observed, 'desired to expel the vapours and exhalations that had been raised with regard to the principle of political economy, and which vapours and exhalations I find for the most part in the fears with which those changes are regarded. The noble Marquis consequently hoped that the Trojan horse would not be allowed to come within

the walls of Parliament. But however applicable the figure may be to other plans, it does not, I submit, apply to the mode of proceeding I ventured to recommend to the House, because we follow the precedent of what Mr. Huskisson did before us. Therefore, more than one moiety of the Trojan horse has already got within the citadel—it has been there for twentyfive years—and yet what has proceeded from its bowels has only tended to augment the rate of increase in the progress of your shipping. Therefore, let us not be alarmed by vague and dreamy vaticinations of evil, which never have been wanting on any occasion, and which never will be wanting so long as this is a free state, wherein every man can find full vent and scope for the expression, not only of his principles, but of his prejudices and his fears. Let us not be deterred by those apprehensions from giving a calm and serious examination to this question, connected as it is with the welfare of our country. Let us follow steadily the lights of experience, and be convinced that He who preserved us during the past will also be sufficient to sustain us during all the dangers of the future.'

Although Mr. Labouchere stated that the Government could not accept Mr. Gladstone's leading suggestions, on the motion for going into committee on the bill the President of the Board of Trade announced a material alteration in the measure. Originally, he had proposed, under certain modifications, to admit foreign nations to a share of the coasting trade. He

now discovered that the proposal would involve a loss to the revenue. The Head Commissioner of Customs had reported that it would be a matter of extreme difficulty to frame any regulations which would not leave the revenue exposed to the greatest danger, if they allowed vessels, either British or foreign, to combine the coasting with the foreign voyage. Under these circumstances, he withdrew his proposal. Mr. Gladstone, after observing that he had objected to this clause on the second reading, proceeded to refer to the subject of conditional legislation, and sketched a plan by which it might have been carried out. It was not now his intention to propose an amendment, but he wished that the Navigation Laws could have been repealed in such a manner as to prevent any serious shock to the great interests involved. But the Government and the party representing the views of the shipowners alike seemed to prefer a decisive course upon the whole question; and as his intention had never been to propose any plan for the mere purpose of obstruction, he thought that it would not now conduce to the public advantage if, by submitting his plan, he wasted the time of the House in fruitless discussions. As the issue now was, between the continuance of the present law and its unconditional repeal, he would not be responsible for any course which might result in retarding the repeal of the law, preferring the plan of the Government, with all its defects, to the continuance of the present system.

At a later stage of this important measure, viz.,

upon the motion that the chairman report progress, a lively episode occurred in consequence of a caustic speech by Mr. Disraeli. The honourable gentleman alluded to the 'great sacrifices' which had been made by Mr. Labouchere and Mr. Gladstone. The former had withdrawn ten of the most important clauses of his bill, which did not now differ from the measure of last year; and Mr. Gladstone, imitating the President of the Board of Trade, announced that he also was about to give up that great development of the principle of reciprocity which the House had awaited with so much suspense. He was reminded by their conduct of that celebrated day in the French Revolution when the nobles and the prelates vied with each other in throwing coronets and mitres to the dust, as useless appendages. The day was still called 'the day of dupes,' and he hoped the House and the country, in recalling the incidents of that evening, would not be reminded that they might have had some share in the appellation. The bill for the repeal of the Navigation Laws had that evening received a paralytic stroke. There was distress out of doors, and the people complained of the precipitate and ill-advised legislation of the Government, which had perniciously affected the great interests of the country. Mr. Disraeli concluded his clever and very severe attack upon the conduct of the Government by affirming, that they were not only injuring and destroying the material interests of the nation, but were laying the foundation of a stock of political discontent, which would do more than

diminish the revenues of the kingdom and the fortunes of its subjects—which might shake the institutions of the country to their centre.

Mr. Gladstone replied to the strictures upon himself. Two charges had been made against him—first, that having undertaken to explain in committee the reasons which led him to prefer the mode of proceeding by conditional legislation to the direct legislation proposed by the Government, he had failed to fulfil that pledge; secondly, that in stating his reasons for refraining from pressing his proposals upon the House he had been inconsistent. He knew that he should have been supported in the outset, but not with a boná fide acceptance of his proposition; it was merely wished to make a tool of him against a plan of which in its general objects he approved, and then to abandon him on the third reading of the bill. For these reasons he would not embarrass the Government. As to the charge of having given a pledge which he had failed to fulfil, he appealed to the recollection of every member whether he had not stated most distinctly that he would exercise his own discretion as to making any proposal in the committee. Though differing from the Government in important particulars, he was not willing to risk the rejection of their measure. Mr. Disraeli himself (continued the right hon. gentleman) saw that the course he had pursued was one favourable to the objects he had in view, or he would not have made that attack upon him. 'I am perfectly satisfied to bear his sarcasm,

good-humoured and brilliant as it is, while I can appeal to his judgment as to whether the step I have taken was unbecoming in one who conscientiously differs with him on the freedom of trade, and has endeavoured to realise it; because, so far from its being the cause of the distress of the country, it has been, under the mercy of God, the most signal and effectual means of mitigating this distress, and accelerating the dawn of the day of returning prosperity.' Mr. Gladstone spoke frequently in committee upon this bill, which eventually passed by a substantial majority.

Another subject, and one of very grave importance, that came before the House in the session of 1849, arose out of the affairs of Canada, which, by the month of May, were in a most serious condition. Riots involving the loss of considerable property had broken out, while in Montreal menacing demonstrations against her Majesty's representative had taken Lord Elgin, the Governor-General, had given his assent to the Rebellion Losses Indemnity Bill, a measure which provided compensation to parties whose property had been destroyed during the rebellion in 1837-8. The Tory party in Canada had opposed this bill with might and main, but unsuccessfully. When Lord Elgin returned from the Parliament House, after having given his assent to it, he was stoned by the populace. The streets were filled by an exasperated mob; the Parliament House was attacked and burned down; and the houses of some of the Ministers were

sacked. Intense excitement prevailed in the province, and England itself was greatly agitated by the news of these disturbances. They became the subject of debate in both Houses. In the Commons, Mr. Roebuck entreated the House to beware how they interfered with the national and proper constitutional expression of their opinion by the Canadians. The money about to be appropriated was the money of Canada, and not the money of England. Mr. Gladstone, while agreeing that the subject was not as yet ripe for judgment, maintained that the House of Commons had a perfect right to interfere in all imperial concerns. The fact that this money was the money of Canada was not of itself a conclusive reason against interference, if upon other grounds it should seem to be called for. The very fact that the sanction of the Crown was required and given must bring the matter within the cognisance and jurisdiction of that House.

On the motion for going into Committee of Supply on the 14th of June, Mr. Gladstone formally introduced the whole subject of the Canadian difficulties, by calling attention to certain parts of the Indemnity Bill. The question, he maintained, was of the first importance, involving the very principles and duties of Government, and touching the very foundation of all social order. Passing by the conduct of Lord Elgin and that of her Majesty's Government, he should confine himself strictly to imperial considerations. The first question they had to consider was,

the final ratification of the Act until the Colonial Legislature had had an opportunity of amending it.

Lord John Russell replied, contending that Mr. Gladstone's speech would tend to aggravate the dissensions in Canada, and to embitter the feelings of hostile parties. He avowed at once the intention of the Government to leave the Act in operation. Upon this, Mr. Herries moved an address to her Majesty to withhold her assent to the measure, but his proposition was defeated by 291 votes to 150.

The subject of colonial reform came before the House on several occasions, directly and indirectly, during this session. An abortive motion by Mr. Roebuck, for leave to bring in a bill for the better government of our colonial possessions, received Mr. Gladstone's support. He was not inclined to throw all the blame upon the Colonial Minister, for he believed the evil lay much deeper. No measure could pass that session, but it would be important that the plan of the bill should go out in a tangible shape to the different colonies, in order to enable them to offer such suggestions as would be of practical use towards maturing the scheme in a future session. The motion was negatived by 116 to 73. But on the 26th of June the subject was reopened, on a motion of Sir W. Molesworth, for an address to the Queen, praying 'that her Majesty will be graciously pleased to issue a commission to inquire into the administration of her Majesty's colonial possessions, with a view of removing the causes of colonial complaint, diminishing the cost

of colonial government, and giving free scope to individual enterprise in the business of colonising.' The motion was seconded by Mr. Hume, and Mr. Gladstone supported it, though he recognised that some objection might be taken to its terms. Lord Grey, notwithstanding his talents and his services, had been led into serious errors, which called for preventive measures. The time had come when an attempt should be made to improve our colonial system, and Mr. Gladstone based his opinion not upon one single consideration, but upon the joint result of many. A commission appointed by the Executive Government, and acting in harmony with that Government, would lead to many useful results. After having touched upon various questions connected with our colonial policy, the right hon. gentleman concluded by expressing his belief that if they studied the welfare of the colonies it would be the way to maintain our connection with them, and to maintain that which was even more important than the mere political connection between the colonies and this country-namely, the love of the colonies for the mother-country, and a desire to imitate the laws and institutions of the great country from which they had sprung. Sir W. Molesworth's motion, however, was unsuccessful—a majority of 74 appearing against it on a division.

When Mr. J. Stuart Wortley introduced his bill for the purpose of removing the legal restriction against marriage with a deceased wife's sister, Mr. Gladstone strongly opposed the measure upon theological, social, and moral grounds. He begged the House to respect the sentiment of nearly the entire country by rejecting the bill. To do otherwise would be to inflict upon the Church the misfortune of having anarchy introduced amongst its ministers. He hoped they would do all that in them lay to maintain the strictness of the obligations of marriage, and the purity of the hallowed sphere of domestic life. In the end the bill was rejected.

One of the chief topics discussed in the Parliamentary session of 1850 was the great depression which still affected the agricultural interests of the country. Although the nation was tranquil, and the state of the revenue satisfactory, and although our foreign trade had largely increased, the farmers still made loud complaints of their disastrous condition, which they attributed to Free Trade measures. whole of the agricultural interests had, they alleged, been seriously affected. Consequently, on the 19th of February, Mr. Disraeli moved for a committee of the whole House to consider such a revision of the Poor Laws of the United Kingdom as might mitigate the distress of the agricultural classes. Sir James Graham strongly opposed the motion; but Mr. Gladstone supported it, and entered at length into the reasons which led him to differ from his right hon. friend upon the subject. If he saw in the motion then before the House a reversal of the policy of Free Trade, he stated that he should join in offering the firmest resistance to such a course. He did not agree

with Sir J. Graham as to the effects of the motion upon the recent commercial policy, or upon the stability of the Administration. No one, by voting for the motion, would be committed to these views. Mr. Disraeli had urged that there was a considerable portion of the charges connected with the Poor Law which might be transferred to the Consolidated Fund, without detracting from the advantages of local management, or impairing the stimulus which local management gave to economy. Concurring with him in that opinion, he (Mr. Gladstone) was prepared to go into committee, and to consider what establishment charges, or what other charges there were upon the poor rates (whether in England, Scotland, or Ireland), or what expenses of management there were which, without injury to the great principle of local control, might be advantageously transferred to the Consolidated Fund. The motion could not be construed into a return to Protection, and in fact it had rather a tendency to weaken the arguments in favour of a retrograde policy, and to draw off the moderate Protectionists. He would vote for this motion on the ground upon which his right hon. friend had declared he should resist it—the ground of justice. It was impossible to look at the nature of the tax for the support of the poor without being struck by the inequality of its incidence. The rate was levied locally for two reasons: first, for the purposes of police, and secondly for the discharge of a sacred obligation enforced upon us by religion. The rate ought to fall upon all de-

scriptions of property, taking an abstract view; and though this might be impracticable, that objection did not lie against the motion before the House. With regard to the position of the landed interest, they were asking at present to be relieved from only a portion of the burden which had descended to them. They did inherit poor rates with their land, but they also inherited with it a protective system, which had given to this property an artificial value—a system which he admitted was as contrary to abstract justice as the inequality of the incidence of the poor rate, which, on the ground of this protective system being thus contrary to abstract justice, the House had effectually destroyed. Mr. Gladstone entirely differed from Sir James Graham as to the class which would be relieved by the transfer of the rate. He believed that the farmer and the independent yeoman would be the persons to benefit by the change; and even if the landlord should ultimately receive the entire benefit, that would not be a fatal objection to the motion. The condition of the farming class and of the agricultural labourers in a large portion of England, to say nothing of Ireland, was such as to demand the careful attention and consideration of the House. He trusted something to the spirit of liberality and conciliation; but he trusted likewise that some who might not consider the claim as exactly one which could be mathematically demonstrated to be one of justice, but who regarded it as a claim connected with the gallant struggle of the farmers and yeomen, and with the independent condition of a large portion of the peasantry of the country—he trusted that there were many such who would not hesitate to give their support to a proposition, the reasonableness of which was, to his mind, clear and satisfactory both in its substance and spirit.

Mr. Disraeli's motion was negatived by a narrow majority, the numbers being—For the resolution, 252; against, 273. Mr. Gladstone voted in the minority, and Sir Robert Peel in the majority.

Another important question of this session was the proposed extension of the benefits of constitutional government to certain of the colonial dependencies. In a comprehensive speech, Lord John Russell unfolded the details of the Government policy on this subject, and introduced the Australian Colonies Government Bill. This measure was combated at every stage. In the outset, referring to the proposition for a single chamber, Mr. Gladstone said he should hereafter press upon the House the expediency of having a double chamber in the scheme of the Australian constitutions. When the colonists knew that the Cape was to have an elective upper chamber they would Accordingly, when Mr. Walpole desire one too. moved his amendment, the object of which was to establish two chambers, one nominated by the Crown, the other elected by the colonists, Mr. Gladstone supported the separation into two chambers. The original clause, however, was carried by 198 to 147. On the bringing up of the report, Sir W. Molesworth moved that the bill be recommitted for the purpose of omit-

ting all clauses which empowered the Colonial Office to disallow colonial laws, to cause colonial bills to be reserved, and to instruct colonial governors as to their conduct in the local affairs of the colonies, and for the purpose of adding clauses defining imperial and colonial powers. Mr. Gladstone, in explaining his vote in favour of this motion, said it was a most important and valuable object to emancipate the colonies from the control of the Government at home, as far as was consistent with imperial interests. The difficulties suggested were not a sufficient answer to a motion for considering whether it was not practicable to devise a sufficiently strict enumeration of imperial questions, and thereby get rid of a great portion of the machinery of an administrative department which had of necessity worked in a way to cause painful disputes. Sir W. Molesworth's motion having been rejected, Mr. Gladstone then moved the insertion of a clause empowering the bishop, clergy, and laity of the Church of England in any colonial diocese to meet, and by mutual consent make regulations for the conduct of their ecclesiastical affairs, guarding the enactment with various provisoes.

The proposed clause was opposed by Mr. Labouchere and others, and upon a division it was rejected by 187 votes to 102. Mr. Gladstone, notwithstanding, carried his opposition to the Government measure to its final stage. On the order for the third reading on the 13th of May, he moved an amendment with the object of suspending the

passing of the bill until the colonies should have had an opportunity of considering its provisions, in conjunction with the proposals varying from them which had been submitted to the House. There was nothing strange, he maintained, in the demand for delay, and they had no proof that the wishes of the colonists in general were in favour of the bill. He adduced evidence to prove that many of its provisions were repugnant to their declared wishes. He objected to the bill in that it permitted, and even required, the constant interference and review of the authorities at home in the local affairs of the colonies; that it authorised the creation, at the requisition of two colonies, of a General Assembly, to exercise a legislative power over all; that it bequeathed, as the last act of imperial legislation for the colonies, a constitution which entrusted the great work of colonial legislation to a single chamber in each colony, and that chamber composed in part of Government nomi-He complained that they had never given the colonists a chance of a double chamber at all, while the very Government which had denied this chance to the Australian colonists had given to the colonists of the Cape of Good Hope a chamber of representatives and a legislative council based upon the principle of election. On a division, the motion was lost by 226 Mr. Gladstone acted as teller in this against 128. division, his colleague being his seconder, Mr. Roebuck. In the minority, supporting Mr. Gladstone, were Mr. Disraeli, Mr. J. Evelyn Denison, Mr. Sidney Herbert, Mr. Goulburn, Mr. R. Palmer, and Mr. Walpole. Looking back upon this division list, and upon Mr. Gladstone's co-teller and supporters, we are tempted to exclaim over the many Parliamentary changes that have since occurred—as Wycherley said in contemplating the portrait of his youth—Quantum mutatus ab illo!

Twice during the session Mr. Gladstone addressed the House on questions connected with slavery. On the 31st of May Sir Edward N. Buxton brought forward the following resolution:—'That it is unjust and impolitic to expose the free-grown sugar of the British colonies and possessions abroad to unrestricted competition with the sugar of foreign slave-trading countries.' The Chancellor of the Exchequer opposed the motion on the ground that it would check the growing spirit of energy in the West Indies, and inspire the delusive hope of a revival of Protection. Mr. Gladstone supported the motion, but asked for only a limited period of Protection, exceptional circumstances seeming to demand it. It was not emancipation, he said, which had ruined the West Indies, but the false policy that succeeded it; for the artificial scarcity of labour in the islands Parliament was responsible. Sir R. Peel had referred to the West Indies as being an exception from the general category of Free Trade. If the evils from which the sugargrowing colonies were suffering could be cured by the restoration of Protection, he (Mr. Gladstone) would vote for it. But though they could not be, he was

still of opinion that the scale of duties ought to be arrested in its descent. The negro population had fallen back in the social scale, and this question vitally affected them as well as the ill-used West India proprietors. He claimed for the latter a fixed period of Protection, which would enable them to surmount their present difficulties. Lord Palmerston touched upon the various inconsistencies of the debate, insisting (not altogether fairly) that Mr. Gladstone intended to vote for a resolution to perpetuate Protection, a system which he condemned. Sir E. N. Buxton's motion was negatived by 275 against 234. The second debate connected with slavery (which, in fact, preceded in point of time that on Sir E. N. Buxton's motion) arose on a resolution proposed by Mr. Hutt for an address to the Crown to direct that negotiations be forthwith entered into for the purpose of releasing this country from all treaty engagements with foreign states for maintaining armed vessels on the coast of Africa to suppress the traffic in slaves. The motion was defeated by a considerable majority. Mr. Gladstone, in supporting it, stated that he joined with those who stigmatised the slave trade as a detestable traffic; but as regarded the system of armed repression, it had long ago been pronounced futile by Sir F. Buxton; it had also been condemned by Lord John Russell, and by the most responsible and credible witnesses. Not only had the squadron failed to extinguish the trade, but it had made no progress towards extinction; and Mr. Gladstone read statements in support of his assertion. The success of our squadron in Africa would be visionary unless we repealed the Sugar Duties Act, doubled the squadron, obtained the right of search from France and America, with power to punish foreign crews; and finally Spain and Brazil must be forced to fulfil their treaties. But the object England had in view eluded her grasp; the slave trader mocked at our vigilance; and while they were in pursuit of that end which philanthropists held most dear, they were only increasing those sufferings which it was their object and desire to prevent.

Upon a motion being brought forward by Mr. Heywood for an inquiry into the state of the English and Irish universities, the Government unexpectedly gave their consent to the issuing of a Royal Commission for that purpose. In the course of the debate, Mr. Gladstone said that any person who might be deliberating with himself whether he would devote a portion of his substance for prosecuting the objects of learning, civilisation, and religion, would be checked by the prospect that at any given time, and under any given circumstances, a Minister, who was the creature of a political majority, might institute a State inquiry into the mode in which the funds he might devise were administered. It was not wise to discourage eleemosynary establishments. Yet while he pleaded the cause of the English universities, he admitted that they had not done for learning all that they might have done; but they had, nevertheless, answered the

circumstances of the times, and the exigencies of the country. It would be better for the Crown to see what could be done to improve the colleges under its control by administering the existing law, rather than to issue the proposed Commission.

But the most important debate of this session and one in which the whole foreign policy of the Government was virtually challenged—arose out of the affairs of Greece. The facts lay in a comparatively small compass. The Greek Government having refused to afford compensation in response to certain demands which the English Government had made on account of the claims of specified British subjects, Admiral Sir Wm. Parker was directed to proceed to Athens, for the purpose of obtaining satisfaction. Failing in this, the Admiral blockaded the Piræus. The news of this somewhat high-handed proceeding produced dissatisfaction in certain quarters in England, the policy being condemned as unworthy of the dignity, and discreditable to the reputation, of a power like Great Britain. The debates in both Houses initiated upon this Greek question took a wider scope than the facts just enumerated, and eventually included our relations with France. The stability of the Whig administration depended upon the result of the discussions. Palmerston, whose policy as Foreign Minister was thus assailed, before the great debate in the House of Commons came on, tendered an explanation of the circumstances attending the withdrawal of the French

Minister from London, and related the proceedings which had taken place on the part of the representatives of both Governments; alleging also his strong desire to conciliate the French Government, and to restore an amicable understanding between the two countries. In the House of Lords, upon a resolution moved by Lord Stanley, the Government found themselves in a minority of 37. This gave the impending debate in the Commons additional importance, the fall of the Ministry following as a natural consequence, unless the Lower House should reverse the condemnation pronounced by the Upper. Mr. Roebuck—much to the surprise of many—came to the defence of the Government, by proposing the following motion:— 'That the principles which have hitherto regulated the foreign policy of her Majesty's Government are such as were required to preserve untarnished the honour and dignity of this country, and, in times of unexampled difficulty, the best calculated to maintain peace between England and the various nations of the world.' The debate commenced on the 24th of June, and extended over four nights. It was marked on both sides of the House by speeches of unusual oratorical excellence and brilliancy. Sir Robert Peel delivered a powerful speech against Ministers, and one memorable now not only for its eloquence, but also from the melancholy fact that it was the last speech he was fated to deliver before that assembly in whose midst he had so long been a conspicuous figure. Lord Palmerston energetically defended his policy in a

speech of nearly five hours' duration. At its close he challenged the verdict of the House whether the principles which had guided the foreign policy of her Majesty's Ministers had been proper and fitting, and whether, as a subject of ancient Rome could hold himself free from indignity by saying Civis Romanus sum, a British subject in a foreign country should not be protected by the vigilant eye and the strong arm of the Government against injustice and wrong.

Mr. Gladstone's speech, in a rhetorical sense, was worthy of the occasion, and fully entitled to rank with the remarkable orations of Lord Palmerston, Sir Robert Peel, Mr. Cockburn, Mr. Cobden, and Mr. Disraeli. It was trenchant and exhaustive, producing a great effect on the House. Touching first upon the position of the Government, and the constitutional doctrines which they had laid down in regard to it, Mr. Gladstone severely condemned the conduct of the First Minister of the Crown in sitting down contentedly under the censure of the House of Lords, and in sheltering himself under precedents which were in reality no precedents at all. The champion of the Government, the hon. member for Sheffield, had not deemed it prudent to raise the same issue as that raised in the House of Lords, but had shifted his issue, in order to enlist in favour of Lord Palmerston the sympathies of those who believed that he studied to promote popular principles. There was an indication of a very great unwillingness to meet the discussion upon the affairs of Greece. With reference to this

Greek question, he (Mr. Gladstone) repudiated precedents which involved the conduct of strong countries against weak ones. He then examined the cases upon which the main issue depended. In that of Stellio Sumachi no redress had been demanded; his wrongs, which, if true, were most serious, remained to that hour unrequited; if he was tortured, he had not even twenty pounds' worth of consolation, nor had the police officers charged with maltreating him been dismissed. Then there was the case of Mr. Finlay, even more important still, in which there came out the grand question, how the relations of British subjects, domiciled in foreign countries, were to be regulated. Where the law of the country was applicable to the case, it had been admitted that the tribunals must first be resorted to. The law applied in this case, yet, although Mr. Finlay was bound to go before those tribunals to which he had always been referred by the Greek Government, diplomatic measures had been employed in his behalf. The Greek Government threw no impediment in the way of arbitration. Baron Gros, who acted as the representative of France, stated most distinctly that the reason why the arbitration had made no progress was this: that Mr. Finlay, who was the complaining party, and whose duty it was to make his case before the arbitrators, did not produce the necessary documents and proofs of his claim. The case of M. Pacifico stood upon the same footing as that of Mr. Finlay; if the Courts were not resorted to, a recourse to diplomatic action was unjustifiable. Under ordinary circumstances, the character of M. Pacifico would not matter one straw in considering his claims to compensation; but M. Pacifico himself compelled the House to examine rather narrowly into the question of his character. With regard to the enormous claims on his behalf—claims amounting to something like £30,000 out of a total of £32,000 or £33,000—it was a fact that the whole of the allegations respecting these claims rested entirely on his personal credit. After a close examination of the details of the claims, Mr. Gladstone asked—Did M. Pacifico seek civil redress? No, he did not even attempt it; all such complaints were received without scrutiny by the British Minister, and reprisals were made upon Greek property to the amount of £80,000. In summing up his charges against Lord Palmerston, Mr. Gladstone affirmed that instead of trusting and trying the tribunals of the country, and employing diplomatic agency simply as a supplemental resource, he had interposed at once in the cases of Mr. Finlay and M. Pacifico the authority of foreign power, in contravention both of the particular stipulations of the treaty in force between this country and Greece, and of the general principles of the law of nations; and had thus set the mischievous example of abandoning the methods of law and order, in order to repair to those of force. The fruit of this policy had been humiliation in regard to France, and a lesson received without reply from the Autocrat of all the Russias. Non-interference had been laid down as the basis of our conduct towards other nations; but

the policy of Lord Palmerston had been characterised by a spirit of active interference. British influence might, on fit occasions, be exercised with other countries to extend institutions from which we derived so much benefit; but we were not to make occasions, and become propagandists of even sound political doctrines. No Minister could really protect Englishmen, except upon principles of policy which universal consent had prescribed for the government of nations. Mr. Gladstone then replied in the following terms to Lord Palmerston's allusion to the Roman citizen:—

'Sir, great as is the influence and power of Britain, she cannot afford to follow, for any length of time, a self-isolating policy. It would be a contravention of the law of nature and of God, if it were possible for any single nation of Christendom to emancipate itself from the obligations which bind all other nations, and to arrogate, in the face of mankind, a position of peculiar privilege. And now I will grapple with the noble lord on the ground which he selected for himself, in the most triumphant portion of his speech, by his reference to those emphatic words, Civis Romanus sum. He vaunted, amidst the cheers of his supporters, that under his administration an Englishman should be, throughout the world, what the citizen of Rome had been. What then, sir, was a Roman citizen? He was the member of a privileged caste; he belonged to a conquering race, to a nation that held all others bound down by the strong arm of power. For him there was to be an exceptional system of law; for him principles were to be asserted, and by him rights were to be enjoyed, that were denied to the rest of the world. Is such, then, the view of the noble lord as to the relation which is to subsist between England and other countries? Does he make the claim for us that we are to be uplifted upon a platform high above the standing-ground of all other nations? It is, indeed, too clear, not only from the expressions but from the whole tone of the speech of the noble viscount, that too much of this notion is lurking in his mind; that he adopts, in part, that vain conception that we, forsooth, have a mission to be the censors of vice and folly, of abuse and imperfection, among the other countries of the world; that we are to be the universal schoolmasters; and that all those who hesitate to recognise our office can be governed only by prejudice or personal animosity, and should have the blind war of diplomacy forthwith declared against them. And certainly, if the business of a Foreign Secretary properly were to carry on diplomatic wars, all must admit that the noble lord is a master in the discharge of his functions. What, sir, ought a Foreign Secretary to be? Is he to be like some gallant knight at a tournament of old, pricking forth into the lists, armed at all points, confiding in his sinews and his skill, challenging all comers for the sake of honour, and having no other duty than to lay as many as possible of his adversaries sprawling in the dust? If such is the idea of a good Foreign Secretary, I, for one, would vote to the noble lord his present appointment for his life. But, sir, I do not understand the duty of a Secretary for Foreign Affairs to be of such a character. I understand it to be his duty to conciliate peace with dignity. I think it to be the very first of all his duties studiously to observe, and to exalt in honour among mankind, that great code of principles which is termed the law of nations, which the honourable and learned member for Sheffield has found, indeed, to be very vague in their nature, and greatly dependent on the discretion of each particular country, but in which I find, on the contrary, a great and noble monument of human wisdom, founded on the combined dictates of reason and experience—a precious inheritance bequeathed to us by the generations that have gone before us, and a firm foundation on which we must take care to build whatever it may be our part to add to their acquisitions, if, indeed, we wish to maintain and to consolidate the brotherhood of nations, and to promote the peace and welfare of the world.'

Mr. Gladstone went on to contend that it was our insular temper, and our self-glorifying tendency, which the policy of the noble lord, and the doctrines of his supporters, tended so much to strengthen, and which had given to that policy the quarrelsome character that marked some of their speeches. Then came the peroration of his speech:—

'Sir, I say the policy of the noble lord tends to encourage and confirm in us that which is our besetting fault and weakness, both as a nation and as individuals. Let an Englishman travel where he will as a private person, he is found in general to be upright, high-minded, brave, liberal, and true; but with all this, foreigners are too often sensible of something that galls them in his presence, and I apprehend it is because he has too great a tendency to self-esteem—too little disposition to regard the feelings, the habits, and the ideas of others. Sir, I find this characteristic too

plainly legible in the policy of the noble lord. I doubt not that use will be made of our present debate to work upon this peculiar weakness of the English mind. The people will be told that those who oppose the motion are governed by personal motives, have no regard for public principles, no enlarged ideas of national policy. You will take your case before a favourable jury, and you think to gain your verdict; but, sir, let the House of Commons be warned—let it warn itself—against all illusions. There is in this case also a course of appeal. There is an appeal, such as the honourable and learned member for Sheffield has made, from the one House of Parliament to the other. There is a further appeal from this House of Parliament to the people of England; but, lastly, there is also an appeal from the people of England to the general sentiment of the civilised world; and I, for my part, am of opinion that England will stand shorn of a chief part of her glory and pride if she shall be found to have separated herself, through the policy she pursues abroad, from the moral supports which the general and fixed convictions of mankind afford—if the day shall come when she may continue to excite the wonder and the fear of other nations, but in which she shall have no part in their affection and regard.

No, sir, let it not be so; let us recognise, and recognise with frankness, the equality of the weak with the strong; the principles of brotherhood among natious, and of their sacred independence. When we are asking for the maintenance of the rights which belong to our fellow-subjects resident in Greece, let us do as we would be done by, and let us pay all the respect to a feeble State, and to the infancy of free institutions, which we should desire and should exact from others towards their maturity and their strength. Let us refrain from all gratuitous and arbitrary meddling in the internal concerns of other States, even as we should resent the same interference if it were attempted to be practised towards ourselves. If the noble lord has indeed acted on these principles, let the Government to which he belongs have your verdict in its favour; but if he has departed from them, as I contend, and as I humbly think and urge upon you that it has been too amply proved, then the House of Commons must not shrink from the performance of its duty, under whatever expectations of momentary obloquy or reproach, because we shall have done what is right; we shall enjoy the peace of our own consciences, and receive, whether a little sooner or a little later, the approval of the public voice for having entered our solemn protest against a system of policy which we believe, nay, which we know, whatever may be its first aspect, must, of necessity, in its final results be unfavourable even to the security of British subjects resident abroad, which it professes so much to study—unfavourable to the dignity of the country, which the motion of the honourable and learned member asserts it preserves—and equally unfavourable to that other great and sacred object, which also it suggests to our recollection, the maintenance of peace with the nations of the world.'

In a debating sense, this speech was the finest which Mr. Gladstone had yet delivered in the House of Commons, and its power was acknowledged by members on both sides of the House. The importance attached to it may be gathered from a sentence in the speech of Mr. (now Lord Chief Justice) Cockburn, who on the following night rose to reply to it. Referring to Mr. Gladstone, the distinguished advocate said, 'I suppose we are now to consider him as the representative of Lord Stanley in this House—Gladstone vice Disraeli, am I to say, resigned or superseded?' On a division upon Mr. Roebuck's motion, the Government succeeded in obtaining a majority of 46, the numbers being—Ayes, 310; Noes, 264.

A lamentable accident which occurred to Sir Robert Peel on the 29th of June, 1850, deprived England of one of her most illustrious statesmen. It appears that only a few minutes before this sad incident, Sir Robert had called at Buckingham Palace for the purpose of leaving his card upon her Majesty. In proceeding up Constitution Hill he had met one of Lady Dover's daughters, and exchanged salutes with her. Immediately afterwards his horse became slightly restive, swerved towards the rails of the Green Park, and threw Sir Robert sideways on his left shoulder. Assistance was speedily at hand—Dr. Foucart amongst others having witnessed the accident, and hastened to the spot. On being raised, Sir Robert groaned

heavily, and in reply to the question whether he was much hurt, said, 'Yes, very much.' He was conveyed home, but the effect of meeting his family was extremely painful, and he swooned in the arms of Dr. Foucart. He was placed upon a sofa in the diningroom, and from this room he was never removed. A consultation was held between Sir Benjamin Brodie, Mr. Cesar Hawkins, Dr. Seymour, and Mr. Hodgson, but Sir Robert's sufferings were so acute, that a minute examination of his injuries could not be made. lingered for two or three days before the end came. An examination made after death disclosed the important fact that the fifth rib on the left side was fractured. This was the region where Sir Robert complained of suffering the greatest pain, and was probably the seat of the mortal injury—the broken rib pressing on the lung, and producing what is technically known as effusion and pulmonary engorgement.\* The news of Sir Robert Peel's death caused a feeling of poignant grief throughout the country. Great and universal were the tokens of respect paid to the memory of one who, whatever may have been his errors (and they were few and insignificant compared with his great merits), had reflected undying lustre upon English statesmanship.

The French Assembly gave testimony of their appreciation of the deceased by unanimously entering an official minute respecting his death, with a record of their sympathetic regret. In England, the national

<sup>\*</sup> Annual Register for 1850.

sorrow found voice in the House of Commons. the 3rd of July Mr. Hume alluded to the great loss which the nation had sustained, and moved that the House should at once adjourn, without transacting any further business. In the Lords, the Duke of Wellington and Lord Brougham referred in touching terms to the departed statesman. The latter, who had frequently been in antagonism with Sir Robert Peel, acknowledged cheerfully and unreservedly the splendid merits of that eminent individual, and said, 'At the last stage of his public career, chequered as it was-and I told him in private that chequered it would be—when he was differing from those with whom he had been so long connected, and from purely public-spirited feelings was adopting a course which was so galling and unpleasing to them—I told him, I say, that he must turn from the storm without to the sunshine of an approving conscience within. ing as we may differ on the point whether he was right or wrong, disputing as we may dispute on the results of his policy, we must all agree that to the course which he believed to be advantageous to his country he firmly adhered, and that in pursuing it he made sacrifices compared with which all the sacrifices exacted from public men by a sense of public duty, which I have ever known or read of, sink into nothing.' Such was the leader whom Mr. Gladstone had faithfully followed for many years. In his own tribute to his late chief in the House of Commons, some of the emotion which naturally arose in his breast after the loss of one so eminent found vent in words. Supporting Mr. Hume's motion, Mr. Gladstone said:—

'I am quite sure that every heart is much too full to allow us, at a period so early, to enter upon a consideration of the amount of that calamity with which the country has been visited in his, I must even now say, premature death; for though he has died full of years and full of honours, yet it is a death which our human eyes will regard as premature; because we had fondly hoped that, in whatever position he was placed, by the weight of his character, by the splendour of his talents, by the purity of his virtues, he would still have been spared to render to his country the most essential services. I will only, sir, quote those most touching and feeling lines which were applied by one of the greatest poets of this country to the memory of a man great indeed, but yet not greater than Sir Robert Peel:—

"Now is the stately column broke,
The beacon light is quenched in smoke;
The trumpet's silver voice is still;
The warder silent on the hill."\*

Sir, I will add no more—in saying this I have, perhaps, said too much. It might have been better had I simply confined myself to seconding the motion. I am sure the tribute of respect which we now offer will be all the more valuable from the silence with which the motion is received, and which I well know has not arisen from the want, but from the excess, of feeling on the part of members of this House.'

After the death of Sir Robert Peel began the disintegration of the party distinguished by his name. Several of its members formally joined the Conservative ranks; but others, such as Sir James Graham, Mr. Gladstone, and Mr. Sidney Herbert, held themselves aloof both from the Whigs and the Tories. They did not feel themselves at liberty at once to throw in their lot with the former, for Conservative

<sup>\*</sup> Sir Walter Scott's lines on William Pitt, which will be found in the introduction to the First Canto of Marmion.

traditions still exercised considerable influence over them, and they could not join the latter, as they were already the subjects of strong liberalising tendencies. From this time forward, and almost until Sir James Graham's death, eleven years afterwards, Mr. Gladstone was greatly indebted to that statesman for his growth in the principles and the administrative art in Although by no means always a popular, Sir James Graham was eminently a practical statesman, skilled in the routine of Parliamentary life, and capable of greatly influencing and impressing younger politicians with strongly-developed business aptitudes. Indeed, the influence he wielded over many of his contemporaries appears to have been much greater than that exercised by men of more commanding talents in the world of statesmanship. His knowledge of Parliamentary tactics made him a power; and it was said of him that if he could be prevailed upon to speak in the course of a great debate, his speech was worth fifty votes. His Parliamentary lore was displayed with such advantage in the Committee on Privilege, in reference to the right of the Lords to interfere on a money bill, that he averted a collision between the two Houses of the Legislature. He was confessedly-said an estimate formed of him upon his death—the best educated and most thoroughly accomplished statesman of the period, though in regard to particular endowments he was inferior to several other distinguished men. No contemporary speaker was able so entirely to command the undivided attention of the House of Commons. He appears, however, to have had two serious defects—in the first place, his great understanding was not balanced by an equally strong judgment; and, secondly, he suffered from a moral timidity which paralysed him at the most anxious and critical moments. However great may have been the indebtedness of Mr. Gladstone to Sir James Graham, if the former had not been possessed of far wider sympathies—to say nothing of superior special intellectual qualities—than his political mentor, he could never have conceived and executed those important legislative Acts by which his name will now chiefly be remembered.

## CHAPTER VII.

## THE NEAPOLITAN PRISONS.

Mr. Gladstone's Visit to Naples—Letters to Lord Aberdeen on the Despotism of the Neapolitan Government — Opposition Deputies imprisoned — 'The Negation of God erected into a System of Government'—Description of the Prisons—The Case of Poerio—Mr. Gladstone's Second Letter to Lord Aberdeen—His Charges substantially correct—The Matter brought before the House of Commons—Lord Palmerston's Reply — Character of the Answers to Mr. Gladstone's Pamphlet—Official Reply of the Neapolitan Government—Completely inadequate in its Nature—Examination of the Document—Mr. Gladstone supported in his Charges—Results of his Intervention—The Struggles for Italian Independence—Work of Cavour and Garibaldi—The Movement assisted by Mr. Gladstone.

For several months in the course of the winter of 1850-51, Mr. Gladstone resided at Naples, circumstances which the right hon. gentleman himself described as 'purely domestic' having taken him thither. The results of this residence in the Neapolitan capital were destined to acquire a more than even European celebrity. Having learned that a large number of the citizens of Naples, who had formed the Opposition in the Chamber of Deputies, had been exiled or imprisoned by King Ferdinand, and that upwards of twenty thousand of that monarch's subjects (as reported) had been thrown into prison on a charge of political disaffection, Mr. Gladstone's sympathies were immediately enlisted on behalf of the oppressed Neapolitans. The question possessed both

a humanitarian and a political aspect, though in the outset it was upon the former ground that Mr. Gladstone felt himself impelled to attempt the redress of evils which were a scandal to the name of civilisation in Europe.

England and the Continent shortly rang with his denunciations of the Neapolitan system of Govern-Having first carefully inquired into the truth of the statements made, only to attest their accuracy, Mr. Gladstone published two letters on the subject, addressed to the Earl of Aberdeen. In the first of these, he disclaimed any idea of having gone to Naples for the purposes of political criticism or censorship, to look for grievances in the administration of the Government, or to propagate ideas belonging to another meridian. But after a residence of three or four months in the southern city, he had returned home with a deep sense of the duty upon him to make some endeavour to mitigate the horrors amidst which the Government of Naples was carried on. Three reasons had chiefly led him to adopt his present course: 'First, that the present practices of the Government of Naples, in reference to real or supposed political offenders, are an outrage upon religion, upon civilisation, upon humanity, and upon decency. Secondly, that these practices are certainly, and even rapidly, doing the work of Republicanism in that country—a political creed which has little natural or habitual root in the character of the people. Thirdly, that as a member of the Conservative party in one of the great family of European nations, I am compelled to remember that that party stands in virtual and real, though perhaps unconscious, alliance with all the established Governments of Europe as such; and that, according to the measure of its influence, they suffer more or less of moral detriment from its reverses, and derive strength and encouragement from its successes.'

Passing over the important prefatory consideration whether the actual Government of the Two Sicilies was one with or without a title, one of law or one of force, Mr. Gladstone came to the real purpose of his letter. His charge against the Neapolitan Government was not one of mere imperfection, not corruption in low quarters, not occasional severity, but that of incessant, systematic, deliberate violation of the law by the Power appointed to watch over and maintain it. In this, perhaps the most impassioned passage of his letter, Mr. Gladstone formulates his indictment:—

'It is such violation of human and written law as this, carried on for the purpose of violating every other law, unwritten and eternal, human and divine; it is the wholesale persecution of virtue, when united with intelligence, operating upon such a scale that entire classes may with truth be said to be its object, so that the Government is in bitter and cruel, as well as utterly illegal, hostility to whatever in the nation really lives and moves, and forms the mainspring of practical progress and improvement; it is the awful profanation of public religion, by its notorious alliance in the governing powers with the violation of every moral rule under the stimulants of fear and vengeance; it is the perfect prostitution of the judicial office which has made it, under veils only too threadbare and transparent, the degraded recipient of the vilest and clumsiest forgeries, got up wilfully and deliberately, by the immediate advisers of the Crown, for the purpose of destroying the peace, the freedom, aye, and even, if not by capital sentences, the life of men amongst the most virtuous, upright, intelligent, distinguished, and refined of the whole community; it is the savage and

cowardly system of moral as well as in a lower degree of physical torture, through which the sentences obtained from the debased courts of justice are carried into effect.

The effect of all this is a total inversion of all the moral and social ideas. Law, instead of being respected, is odious. Force, and not affection, is the foundation of government. There is no association, but a violent antagonism, between the idea of freedom and that of order. The governing power, which teaches of itself that it is the image of God upon earth, is clothed in the view of the overwhelming majority of the thinking public with all the vices for its attributes. I have seen and heard the strong and too true expression used, "This is the negation of God erected into a system of Government."

There was a very general belief that the political prisoners in the kingdom of the Two Sicilies numbered between fifteen or twenty and thirty thousand; but as the Government withheld all means of information, the exact numbers could not be given. inquiries made, Mr. Gladstone believed that twenty thousand was not an unreasonable estimate. Naples alone there were some hundreds under indictment capitally. He had been inclined to regard as monstrous and incredible a statement that nearly all those who had formed the Opposition in the Chamber of Deputies under the Constitution were in prison or exile; but he was confronted with a list in detail which too fully proved the truth of the assertion. Out of 140 deputies—this being the average of those who came to Naples to exercise the functions of the Chamber—seventy-six had been either arrested, or had gone into exile. So that the Government of Naples had 'consummated its audacity by putting into prison, or driving into banishment undergone

<sup>\* &#</sup>x27;È la negazione di Dio eretta a sistema di governo.'

for the sake of escaping prison, an actual majority of the representatives of the people.'

So much for the numbers of those incarcerated. But the mode of procedure, also, was arbitrary in the extreme. The law of Naples required that personal liberty should be inviolable, except under a warrant from a Court of Justice. Yet in utter defiance of this law the Government watched the people, paid domiciliary visits, ransacked houses, seized papers and effects, and tore up floors at pleasure under pretence of searching for arms, imprisoned men by the score, by the hundred, by the thousand, without any warrant whatever, sometimes without even any written authority at all, or anything beyond the word of a policeman; constantly without any statement whatever of the nature of the offence. Charges were fabricated to get rid of inconvenient persons. Perjury and forgery were resorted to in order to establish charges, and the whole mode of conducting trials was a burlesque of justice. Describing the dungeons, Mr. Gladstone says, 'The prisons of Naples, as is well known, are another name for the extreme of filth and horror. I have really seen something of them, but not the worst. This I have seen, my Lord: the official doctors not going to the sick prisoners, but the sick prisoners, men almost with death on their faces, toiling up-stairs to them at that charnel-house of the Vicaria, because the lower regions of such a palace of darkness are too foul and loathsome to allow it to be expected that professional

men should consent to earn bread by entering them.' The diet was abominable, and the filth of the prisons unendurable. After narrating the hardships of one Pironte, formerly a judge, and of the Baron Porcari, Mr. Gladstone deals with the case of the distinguished patriot, Carlo Poerio. He was a refined and accomplished gentleman, a copious and elegant speaker, a respected and blameless character, yet he had been arrested and condemned for treason. After a pretty full examination of his case, the writer said, 'The condemnation of such a man for treason is a proceeding just as conformable to the laws of truth, justice, decency, and fair play, and to the common sense of the community—in fact, just as great and gross an outrage on them all—as would be a like condemnation in this country of any of our best-known public men, Lord John Russell, or Lord Lansdowne, or Sir James Graham, or yourself.' There was no name dearer to the English nation than was that of Poerio to his Neapolitan fellow-countrymen. The case of Settembrini was also a mournful and remarkable one. The capital sentence passed upon him was not executed, but he was reserved for a fate much harderdouble irons for life on a remote sea-girt rock, and it was feared that he was directly subjected to physical torture. The mode specified was that of thrusting sharp instruments under the finger-nails. Mr. Gladstone narrates in detail the iniquitous proceedings in connection with Poerio, who had been tried and condemned on the sole accusation of a

worthless character named Jervolino. Yet Poerio would have been acquitted by a division of four to four of his judges, had not Navarro (who sat as a judge while directly concerned in the charge against the prisoner), by the distinct use of intimidation, procured the number necessary for a sentence. A statement is furnished, on the authority of an eyewitness, as to the inhumanity with which invalid prisoners were treated by the Grand Criminal Court at Naples; and Mr. Gladstone also minutely describes the manner of the imprisonment of Poerio and sixteen of his co-accused. Each prisoner bore a weight of chain amounting to thirty-two pounds, and for no purpose whatever were these chains undone. the prisoners were confined night and day in a small room, which may be described as amongst the closest of dungeons. But Poerio was condemned after this to even a still lower depth of calamity. 'Never before have I conversed,' says Mr. Gladstone, speaking of Poerio, 'and never probably shall I converse again, with a cultivated and accomplished gentleman, of whose innocence, obedience to law, and love of his country, I was as firmly and as rationally assured as of your lordship's or that of any other man of the very highest character, whilst he stood before me amidst surrounding felons, and clad in the vile uniform of guilt and shame. But he is now gone where he will scarcely have the opportunity even of such conversation. I cannot honestly suppress my conviction that the object in the case of Poerio, as a man of mental power sufficient to be feared, is to obtain the scaffold's aim by means more cruel than the scaffold, and without the outcry which the scaffold would create.' Mr. Gladstone concluded his letter by saying that it was time either the veil should be lifted from scenes fitter for hell than for earth, or that some considerable mitigation should be voluntarily adopted.

The second letter to Lord Aberdeen was the sequel to the first. In it the writer said he had been anxious, in the first instance, that all that was possible in the way of private representation and remonstrance should be attempted; and he did not regret the course he had taken, though it entailed serious delays. Meeting the natural inquiry why he should simply appear in his personal capacity through the press, instead of inviting to this grave and painful question the attention of that House of Parliament to which he belonged, Mr. Gladstone said that he had advisedly abstained from mixing up his statements with any British agencies or influences which were official, diplomatic, or political. The claims and interests which he had in view were either wholly null and valueless, or they were broad as the extension of the human race, and long-lived as its dura-As to his general charges he had nothing to retract. He stood upon the conviction that his representations had not been too highly charged, and that the most disgraceful circumstances were those which rested upon public notoriety, or upon his own

personal knowledge. It was alleged that he had greatly overstated the number of prisoners; and though his own calculation was founded on reasonable opinion, he would give the Neapolitan Government the full benefit of the contradiction. The number of political prisoners, in itself, was a secondary feature of the case: if they were fairly and legally arrested, fairly and legally treated before trial—fairly and legally tried, that was the main matter. He was aware that for the honour of human nature, statements such as he had made should in the first instance be received with incredulity. Men ought to be slow to believe that such things could happen, and happen in a Christian country, the seat of almost the oldest European civilisation. But though thus disposed in the outset, he hoped they would not bar their minds to the entrance of the light, however painful were the objects it might disclose. The general probability of his statements could not, unfortunately, be gainsaid. Having established this, he proceeds to set forth certain material points connected with the political position of the Government of Naples. He examines the Articles of the Neapolitan Constitution, and contrasts them with the actual government of the country, in contradiction and defiance, at every point, of its indisputable and fundamental law. shows, from a catechism in vogue, the debased ideas concerning moral, political, and religious questions taught to the youths of Naples. He concludes, however, by exempting—regarding them as a body—the

clergy of the Roman Catholic Church from implication in the proceedings of the Government.

As a natural consequence, these letters excited great indignation in this country, the proceedings of the Neapolitan Government being utterly repugnant and abhorrent to the feelings of every true Englishman. Before the House of Commons was prorogued, attention was drawn to Mr. Gladstone's statements. De Lacy Evans put the following question to the Foreign Secretary:—'From a publication entitled to the highest consideration, it appears that there are at present above 20,000 persons confined in the prisons of Naples for alleged political offences; that these prisoners have, with extremely few exceptions, been thus immured in violation of the existing laws of the country, and without the slightest legal trial or public inquiry into their respective cases; that they include a late Prime Minister and a majority of the late Neapolitan Parliament, as well as a large proportion of the most respectable and intelligent classes of society; that these prisoners are chained two and two together; that these chains are never undone, day or night, for any purpose whatever, and that they are suffering refinements of cruelty and barbarity unknown in any other civilised country. It is, consequently, asked if the British Minister at the Court of Naples has been instructed to employ his good offices in the cause of humanity, for the diminution of these lamentable severities, and with what result?' Lord Palmerston replied that her Majesty's Government

had received with pain a confirmation of the impressions which had been created by various accounts they had received from other quarters, of the very unfortunate and calamitous condition of the kingdom of Naples. The British Government, however, had not deemed it a part of their duty to make any formal representations to the Government of Naples on a matter that related entirely to the internal affairs of that country. 'At the same time,' his lordship continued, 'Mr. Gladstone—whom I may freely name, though not in his capacity of a member of Parliament . —has done himself, I think, very great honour by the course he pursued at Naples, and by the course he has followed since; for I think that when you see an English gentleman, who goes to pass a winter at Naples, instead of confining himself to those amusements that abound in that city, instead of diving into volcanoes and exploring excavated cities—when we see him going to courts of justice, visiting prisons, descending into dungeons, and examining great numbers of the cases of unfortunate victims of illegality and injustice, with a view afterwards to enlist public opinion in the endeavour to remedy those abuses—I think that is a course that does honour to the person who pursues it; and concurring in feeling with him that the influence of public opinion in Europe might have some useful effect in setting such matters right, I thought it my duty to send copies of his pamphlet to our Ministers at the various Courts of Europe, directing them to give to each Government copies of the

pamphlet, in the hope that, by affording them an opportunity of reading it, they might be led to use their influence in promoting what is the object of my hon. and gallant friend—a remedy for the evils to which he has referred.' This announcement by the Foreign Secretary was warmly cheered by the House. A few days afterwards Lord Palmerston was requested by Prince Castelcicala to forward the reply of the Neapolitan Government to the different European Courts to which Mr. Gladstone's pamphlet had been His lordship, with his wonted courage and independent spirit, replied that he 'must decline being accessory to the circulation of a pamphlet which, in my opinion, does no credit to its writer, or the Government which he defends, or to the political party of which he professes to be the champion.' He also informed the Prince that information received from other sources led him to the conclusion that Mr. Gladstone had by no means overstated the various evils which he had described; and he (Lord Palmerston) regretted that the Neapolitan Government had not set to work earnestly and effectually to correct manifold and grave abuses which clearly existed.

The replies to Mr. Gladstone's pamphlet were both virulent and numerous. They appeared in London, Paris, Turin, and Naples. M. Jules Gondon, editor of the *Univers*, took up the cause of the Government which Mr. Gladstone had successfully assailed; but the value of his reply may be gauged from the

concluding sentence of his work, in which he describes the Sovereign of Naples as follows:—'Oui, je m'étais renfermé dans les limites de la vérité la plus rigoureuse, en appelant Ferdinand II. le plus digne et le meilleur des Rois!'\* M. Gondon wrote from the standpoint of a bigoted son of the Roman Catholic Church, and his work evidently proves him to have been much more concerned that the virtues of that 'most religious monarch' King Ferdinand should have been called into question, than he was over the sufferings of thousands of men who had been unjustly convicted, and condemned to languish in the prisons of Naples. Another French critic, M. Alphonse Balleydier, also replied to Mr. Gladstone, but in a similar strain. In high-sounding periods (which did nothing to remove the impressions that Mr. Gladstone's revelations had created) he attacked both the writer of the pamphlet and Lord Palmerston with extraordinary bitterness and disingenuousness. He attributed much of what had been said against King Ferdinand to the spite of the democrats, who had never forgiven him for having dared to dispute his crown with them, and to vanquish them. He denied the right of Lord Palmerston to constitute himself a judge of the Neapolitan Government, and demanded, 'Mais qu'importe la vérité à Lord Palmerston, qu'importe l'exactitude des faits à celui dont la conduite politique se règle sur le

<sup>\*</sup> La Terreur dans le Royaume de Naples. Lettre au Right Honorable W. E. Gladstone, membre du Parlement Britannique, en réponse à ses deux lettres à lord Aberdeen. Par Jules Gondon. Paris.

mensonge?'\* These answers were, in truth, no answers at all, but pamphlets written from the controversial point of view, because something was necessary to be said by way of defence. And the professed corrections they made of Mr. Gladstone's statements did not touch the real basis of the question. The writer announced in his second letter that to such contradictions of his allegations as were not subject to be verified, cross-examined, or exposed, he should decline to attend. One answer was put forward, however, which demanded some attention, viz., the official reply of the Neapolitan Government.†

To this, accordingly, Mr. Gladstone addressed himself, in a pamphlet published in the following year, 1852. He hastened to place the reply point by point in the scales along with his own accusations. The reply was in reality a tacit admission of the accuracy of nine tenth parts of the statements in the letters to Lord Aberdeen. Mr. Gladstone then proceeded to enumerate the few retractations which he had to make, and which were five in number. He had been in error as to the prisoner Settembrini having been tortured, and also as to his having been condemned to double irons for life; the statement that six judges had been dismissed at Reggio upon presuming to acquit a batch of political prisoners

<sup>\*</sup> La Vérité sur les Affaires de Naples : Réfutation des Lettres de M. Gladstone. Par Alphonse Balleydier. Paris.

<sup>†</sup> Rassegna degli Errori e della Fallacie publicate dal Sig. Gladstone, in due sue Lettere indiritte al Conte Aberdeen. Napoli, Stamperia del Fibreno, 1851.

required modifying to three; seventeen invalids had not been massacred in the prison of Procida during a revolt, as stated; and certain prisoners alleged to have been still incarcerated after acquittal had been released after the lapse of two days. These were the only modifications he had to make in his previous statements. Not one amongst the whole list of his accusations rested on hearsay, and he now proceeded to demonstrate how small and insignificant a fraction of error had made its way into his letters. He fearlessly asserted that corporal agony was inflicted, and that without judicial authority, by the Neapolitan police in the prisons. Settembrini, a political prisoner, was confined in a small room with eight other One of the latter boasted of having murdered, at different times, thirty-five persons. Several of these exploits he had committed upon his prison companions, and the murders in this Ergastolo had exceeded fifty in a single year. Although in the massacre at Procida invalids were not slain, yet prisoners who took refuge and hid under beds were dragged forth and shot in cold blood by the gendarmi after order had been restored. The work of slaughter was twice renewed, and two officers received promotion or honours for that abominable enormity.

Dealing with the points in which the Neapolitan Government had controverted the substance of his inculpatory statements, Mr. Gladstone found no cause to recede from, but rather to heighten those statements. After examining thoroughly various points of detail,

he defended at length his statement as to the enormous number of the prisoners. One sample of the blunders made by his critics may be given. M. Gondon had published a romantic account of Poerio's career, his connection with Mazzini at Paris, his contributions to the Giovine Italia, &c., whereas Poerio never knew Mazzini, never was at Paris, never wrote a line in the Giovine Italia. All the replies had failed to prove him wrong in any of his substantial charges. 'The arrow has shot deep into the mark,' observed Mr. Gladstone, 'and cannot be dislodged. But I have sought, in once more entering the field, not only to sum up the state of the facts in the manner nearest to exactitude, but likewise to close the case as I began it, presenting it from first to last in the light of a matter which is not primarily or mainly political, which is better kept apart from Parliamentary discussion, which has no connection whatever with any peculiar idea or separate object or interest of England, but which appertains to the sphere of humanity at large, and well deserves the consideration of every man who feels a concern for the well-being of his race, in its bearings on that well-being; on the elementary demands of individual domestic happiness; on the permanent maintenance of public order; on the stability of thrones; on the solution of that great problem which, day and night in its innumerable forms, must haunt the reflections of every statesman both here and elsewhere, how to harmonise the old with the new conditions of society, and to mitigate the increasing stress of time and

change upon what remains of this ancient and venerable fabric of the traditional civilisation of Europe.' Although the question had been asked whether a Government 'could be induced to change its policy because some individual or other had by lying accusations held it up to the hatred of mankind,' yet he had the satisfaction of knowing that upon the challenge of a mere individual, the Government of Naples had been compelled to plead before the tribunal of general opinion, and to admit the jurisdiction of that tribunal. It was to public sentiment that the Neapolitan Government was paying deference when it resolved on the manly course of an official reply; and he hoped that further deference would be paid to that public sentiment in the complete reform of its departments and the whole future management of its affairs. After a consideration of the political position of the throne of the Two Sicilies in connection with its dominions on the mainland, Mr. Gladstone thus concluded his examination of the official reply of the Neapolitan Government:—'I express the hope that it may not become a hard necessity to keep this controversy alive until it reaches its one possible issue, which no power of man can permanently intercept; I express the hope that while there is time, while there is quiet, while dignity may yet be saved in showing mercy, and in the blessed work of restoring Justice to her seat, the Government of Naples may set its hand in earnest to the work of real and searching, however quiet and unostentatious, reform; that it may not become unavoidable to reiterate these appeals from the hand of power to the one common heart of mankind; to produce those painful documents, those harrowing descriptions, which might be supplied in rank abundance, of which I have scarcely given the faintest idea or sketch, and which, if they were laid from time to time before the world, would bear down like a deluge every effort at apology or palliation, and would cause all that has recently been made known to be forgotten and eclipsed in deeper horrors yet; lest this strength of offended and indignant humanity should rise up as a giant refreshed with wine, and, while sweeping away these abominations from the eye of Heaven, should sweep away along with them things pure and honest, ancient, venerable, salutary to mankind, crowned with the glories of the past, and still capable of bearing future fruit.'

Mr. Gladstone was not left single-handed in the defence of his original letters to Lord Aberdeen. There was published anonymously A Detailed Exposure of the Apology put forth by the Neapolitan Government—a remarkably able and conclusive pamphlet.\* Mr. Gladstone himself acknowledged the carefulness and knowledge with which this reply was written. The author examined the official answer point by point, showing its utter inadequacy to meet Mr. Gladstone's charges. He thanked the authors, prompters, and distributors of the Government defence, the more so because of their imprudent step in answering at all.

<sup>\*</sup> Longmans, 1852.

There was 'no Machiavel in the Neapolitan Cabinet,'
or he would have advised them with cutting irony,
'Let others write, but do you answer nothing. Be
content with having beaten down by armed violence
the liberties you guaranteed by oaths. Be content
with the fact of oppression upholding the fact of
perjury. Be wise and be silent.'

Although Mr. Gladstone's pamphlets struck a powerful yet indirect blow at Neapolitan despotism, and thus contributed towards the great movement for a regenerated and a united Italy, his original objects were not immediately gained. If France and England had unitedly brought strong pressure to bear upon the Government of Naples, substantial redress might possibly have been obtained; but such joint action was not at once forthcoming. In a note appended to the fourteenth edition of his letters, Mr. Gladstone stated that by a royal decree of the 27th of December, 1858, ninety-one political prisoners therein named had their punishment commuted into perpetual exile from the kingdom of the Two Sicilies; but a Ministerial order of January the 9th, 1859, directed that they should be conveyed to America. Out of these ninetyone prisoners no fewer than fourteen had died long before in dungeons: such as Emilio Mazza, who died in 1851; Luigi Lanza and Father Girolamo da Cardinale, a Capucin, who died in 1854; Giuseppe Dardano, who died in 1855; and others. Sixty-six embarked on the 16th of January, and were taken to Cadiz, where they were shipped on board an American

sailing vessel, which was to have conveyed them to New York, but eventually landed them at Cork. Eleven more were kept behind, either because it was afterwards thought advisable not to release them, as in the case of Longo and Delli Franci, two artillery officers, who were still in the dungeons of Gaeta; or because the prisoners were too ill to be moved, as was the case with Pironti, who was paralytic; or because they were in some provincial dungeons too far from Naples. Such was the fate of some of the patriots officially liberated by Ferdinand's successor, Francis II.

It may be mentioned here, while we are treating of Italian questions, that Mr. Gladstone executed and published in 1851 a translation of Farini's important and bulky work, The Roman State, from 1815 to 1850. In a letter from the author to his translator, the former said that he had dedicated the concluding volume of his work to Mr. Gladstone, who, by his love of Italian letters, and by his deeds of Italian charity, had established a relationship with Italy in the spirit of those great Italian writers who had been their masters in eloquence, in civil philosophy, and in national virtue, from Dante and Macchiavelli, down to Alfieri and Gioberti. Signor Farini endorsed the charges made by Mr. Gladstone against the Neapolitan Government. 'The scandalous trials for high treason,' he observed, 'still continue at Naples; accusers, examiners, judges, false witnesses, all are bought; the prisons, those tombs of the living, are full; two thousand citizens, of all ranks and conditions, are already condemned to the dungeons; as many to confinement; double that number to exile; the majority guilty of no crime but that of having believed in the oaths made by Ferdinand II.' But, in truth, nothing more was needed to press home the indictment.

Italy, generally, was at the period of Mr. Gladstone's visit to Naples—and, indeed, had been for some time previously—in a disturbed condition. Italian nationality was already the cry of many ardent patriots, and the whole of northern Italy was chafing under the galling yoke of Austria. The Sicilians were eventually reduced to subjection, after a noble struggle on their part, and Brescia and Rome fell before the overwhelming Austrian power. south, however, Venice bravely prolonged the contest for independence, though unfortunately ineffectually. We have seen the infamous measures which the King of Naples adopted for the suppression of every aspiration after liberty in his dominions. This system of misgovernment went on for some years longer, and was the principal cause of the revolutionary movements which continually disturbed the Italian penin-Meanwhile, Count Cavour was working for the independence of Italy, and in April, 1856, he addressed to the British and French Governments a protest against the failure of the Paris Conference to settle the Italian question. Italy, he said, had been disturbed for the last seven years, during which a violent system of repression had prevailed. A settlement had been hoped for from the Conference, but,

as this had failed, he feared that the commotions would break out with greater excitement than ever. Remonstrances were afterwards made with the King of Naples and his Ministers, but these were of no avail, only drawing forth an assertion of the liberty of the Sovereign to deal with his subjects as he pleased. France and England accordingly withdrew their representatives from Naples.

The storm shortly afterwards broke. It is unnecessary to follow in detail the noble struggles for Italian independence, which are matter of recent and familiar history. In 1860 the brilliant successes of Garibaldi drove Francis II. into a condition of terror. Like all evil men, when faced with the consequences of their misdeeds, he made the most lavish protestations of amendment, and promised liberal reforms. But it was now too late. The victorious General pushed forward, and the work of liberation proceeded apace. A decree was ultimately issued by Garibaldi, stating that the Two Sicilies, which had been redeemed by Italian blood, and which had freely elected him their dictator, formed an integral part of one and indivisible Italy, under the constitutional king Victor Emmanuel and his descendants. One by one the great questions connected with Italian unity were solved. The dethronement and expulsion from his kingdom of Francis II. were the just and legitimate fruits of the hateful policy pursued by himself and his predecessor. Count Cavour was the brain, as Garibaldi was the hand, of that mighty movement

which resulted in the unity of Italy; but, as Englishmen, we may take pride in the fact that not the least amongst the precipitating causes of this movement was the fearless exposure by Mr. Gladstone of the cruelties and tyrannies of the Neapolitan Government.

Lord Palmerston, indeed, reflected the national sentiment of England when he declared from his place in the House of Commons that Mr. Gladstone had done himself honour by the course he had thus pursued in relation to the Neapolitan prisons. He had lifted his voice with energy and effect on behalf of oppressed humanity, and in condemnation of one of the worst and most despotic Governments that have ever afflicted mankind. This episode remains, and ever will remain—in the estimation both of his fellow-countrymen and the friends of justice and freedom throughout the world—one of the brightest in his career.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## MR. GLADSTONE'S FIRST BUDGET.

Mr. Gladstone and the Conservative Party—The Session of 1851—Papal Aggression—The Government losing Popularity—Ecclesiastical Titles Bill—Speech of Mr. Gladstone—Dismissal of Lord Palmerston—Defeat of the Russell Government—Lord Derby forms a Ministry—Death of the Duke of Wellington-Meeting of the new Parliament-A Free Trade Debate-Mr. Sidney Herbert's Rebuke of the Chancellor of the Exchequer—A dramatic Scene— Mr. Disraeli's Budget—Attacked by Mr. Gladstone—Defeat and Resignation of the Government—Lord Aberdeen takes Office—Mr. Gladstone Chancellor of the Exchequer—Opposition to his Re-election for Oxford University— Returned by a substantial Majority—Policy of the Aberdeen Ministry— Mr. Gladstone's Scheme for the Reduction of the National Debt—His first Budget—Eloquently expounded—Its Effect upon the House—Details of the Financial Statement—Masterly Analysis of the Income-tax—Comprehensive Character of the Budget—Opposition on the Question of the Income-tax— The Budget passes—Its Reception by the Press and the Country—The Chancellor of the Exchequer a worthy Successor of Pitt and Peel.

Before discussing the brilliant financial measures of 1853, which caused Mr. Gladstone's name to be associated with those of Pitt and of Peel, it is of importance to touch, however briefly, on the sessions of 1851 and 1852. It was during this period that Mr. Gladstone became finally alienated from the Conservative party, although he did not throw himself completely into the Liberal ranks until some years afterwards. The precise date at which he ceased to be nominally a Conservative cannot be assigned, for Mr. Gladstone has himself stated that so late as 1851 he had not formally left the Tory party. Nevertheless, his ad-

vance towards Liberalism in the sessions above-named was very pronounced. There was certainly a marked declination from the old Conservative standard. His trusted leader was dead, and there were questions coming to the front which he felt demanded from him something more than the *non possumus* of his early political creed.

A few days after the opening of Parliament, in 1851, Lord John Russell moved for leave to bring in a bill to counteract the aggressive policy of the Church of Rome. The country was well-nigh in a condition of panic in consequence of Papal aggression, and Lord John Russell had given an impetus to the popular feeling by his famous Durham letter. For four days the House of Commons debated the question, and at length the Premier's motion was carried by 395 votes against 63. This enormous majority attested the existing wide-spread fear of Romish machinations; but before the measure thus approved could be carried through the House, political events of an important nature transpired. The Ministerial party was to a great extent demoralised, while the Conservatives were strong and compact, and had received the temporary adhesion of the Peelites. The deep distress which prevailed in the agricultural districts induced Mr. Disraeli to renew his motion upon the burdens on land and the inequalities of taxation, and accordingly he brought forward a resolution to the effect that it was the duty of the Government to introduce measures for the alleviation of the distress without delay. The

Government admitted that there was a prevalence of distress, but denied that it was increasing. They advanced statistics proving that pauperism had greatly declined in all parts of the kingdom—England, Scotland, and Ireland. The revenue had increased so as to reach the unexampled amount of £70,000,000, and commerce was in a most prosperous condition. James Graham stigmatised the motion as an attempt to turn out the Administration, to dissolve Parliament, and to return to Protection. Ministers, however, only obtained the small majority of 14 in a House consisting of 548 members. An actual defeat of the Government occurred on the 20th of February, upon Mr. Locke King's motion to introduce a bill for assimilating the county franchise to that of the boroughs. Lord John Russell spoke against the resolution, but it was carried by 100 against 52. The Government also lost prestige by the Chancellor of the Exchequer's budget, introduced on the 17th of February. It demanded a renewed lease for three years of the unpopular income-tax, but promised a partial remission of the window duties, together with some relief to the agriculturists. Later in the session, the first financial statement having been stifled, a second budget was produced. A house-tax was imposed, and the bonus to the agriculturists withdrawn. window tax was also repealed, but the income-tax was re-demanded for three years. Although the main features of the budget were accepted by the House, the Government sustained several defeats on minor

financial questions, which tended still further to diminish their popularity.

In February, Lord John Russell having determined to retire, Lord Stanley was sent for by the Queen, but was unable to form a Ministry; the Earl of Aberdeen was next summoned, but the penal measures against the Roman Catholics being unpalatable to the Peelites, he declined to take office. The crisis ended in Lord John Russell's consenting to retain his position. The Ecclesiastical Titles Bill was now pushed forward. This measure 'encountered the strong opposition of almost all the men who had assisted in removing those restrictions on the religious liberty of Englishmen, which Lord John Russell had done more perhaps than any living man to take away.' But, besides this, the measure was so emasculated as to be viewed with little satisfaction by the staunch Protestants, while to the Roman Catholics it appeared only in the light of an insult. The Peelites were most strongly opposed to the bill.

The debate on the second reading was one of the longest Parliamentary discussions which had occurred for many years. Sir James Graham delivered an effective speech against the bill, but perhaps the most powerful oration on the same side came from Mr. Gladstone. He said he chose to rest upon the fact that our Constitution was strong enough to resist any aggression by any power whatsoever. If they attempted to defend the Church of England by temporal legislation, they would utterly fail. If the

Papal authorities had interfered with the temporal affairs of the country, in a manner not permitted to any other religious body, legislation was not only permissible and just, but demanded. But till that could be shown, we had no right to interfere. Referring to the vaunting and boastful character of the Papal documents, Mr. Gladstone condemned this spirit, but he asked whether it was just to make our Roman Catholic fellow-subjects suffer for language for which they were not responsible? The bill was most inadequate for its purpose, and he proceeded to analyse its provisions. Because the Roman Catholics recognised the Pope as their spiritual head, this did not justify us in interfering with their religious freedom. The friends of the bill must show that the bishops were not spiritual officers, but appointed for temporal purposes, before there was ground for interference: and if the appointment of bishops, per se, was a spiritual, not a temporal act, why exempt the Scottish bishops? There was nothing in the rescript to show that it possessed any temporal character, and therefore there was not a shadow of ground for the bill. Mr. Gladstone next pointed out the effect which such a measure would have upon the two parties existent in the Romish community. The Roman Catholic laity and secular clergy, who were the moderates, had for several centuries been struggling for the appointment of diocesan bishops, while the regulars and cardinals at the Vatican—the extreme party—had persistently struggled against it.

adopting the proposed legislation, the Roman Catholics would be driven back upon the Pope, and consequently become alienated and estranged from ourselves. Mr. Gladstone, in concluding, said that the opponents of the bill, though in a minority, were strong in the consciousness of a strong cause. They had justice on their side, and believed that public opinion would soon follow.

The division list reflected the temper of the time. The Government obtained an overwhelming majority, the numbers being—For the second reading of the bill, 438; against, 95. But in this small minority were many of the most distinguished men in the House—men who had always been true to the principles of civil and religious liberty—Gladstone, Roundell Palmer, Bright, Cobden, Hume, Graham, Milner Gibson, and others. The bill, though opposed in its subsequent stages, eventually passed.

On the 24th of December, 1851, Lord Palmerston was dismissed from the office of Foreign Secretary, on the ground that he had on various occasions acted independently of his colleagues. While the Cabinet had passed a resolution to abstain from the expression of opinions in approval or disapproval of the recent coup d'état in France, it was complained that Lord Palmerston had, both in public despatches and private conversation, spoken favourably of the policy adopted by Louis Napoleon. In the following February the Militia Bill came on for discussion, and upon an

amendment moved by Lord Palmerston the Government were defeated. Lord John Russell resigned, and Lord Derby succeeded. The latter made unsuccessful overtures to Mr. Gladstone to join his Ministry: in the irony of events, it was destined that the Derby Administration should not be supported, but virtually driven out of office, by Mr. Gladstone.

A Militia Bill, and some other measures—chiefly of a social and sanitary character—were passed, and then the Government dissolved, being in a minority in the House. During the recess, England was called upon to lament the death of the great Duke of Wellington, who passed away on the afternoon of the 14th of September. A public funeral was awarded to the victor of Waterloo, and on the assembling of Parliament many eloquent tributes were paid to his memory. Less ornate than some other speeches, Mr. Gladstone's eulogy of the Duke was valuable as drawing out the special lessons to be deduced from a career like his—a life which had been extended by Providence to a green old age, and which had ended full of honours. Here is a passage from the address:—

'While many of the actions of his life, while many of the qualities he possessed, are unattainable by others, there are lessons which we may all derive from the life and actions of that illustrious man. It may never be given to another subject of the British Crown to perform services so brilliant as he performed; it may never be given to another man to hold the sword which was to gain the independence of Europe, to rally the nations around it, and while England saved herself by her constancy, to save Europe by her example; it may never be given to another man, after having attained such eminence, after such an unexampled series of victories, to show equal moderation in peace as he has shown greatness in war, and to devote the remainder of his life to the cause of internal and

external peace for that country which he has so served; it may never be given to another man to have equal authority both with the Sovereign he served, and with the Senate of which he was to the end a venerated member; it may never be given to another man after such a career to preserve even to the last the full possession of those great faculties with which he was endowed, and to carry on the services of one of the most important departments of the State with unexampled regularity and success, even to the latest day of his life. These are circumstances, these are qualities, which may never occur again in the history of this country. But there are qualities which the Duke of Wellington displayed, of which we may all act in humble imitation: that sincere and unceasing devotion to our country; that honest and upright determination to act for the benefit of the country on every occasion; that devoted loyalty, which, while it made him ever anxious to serve the Crown, never induced him to conceal from the Sovereign that which he believed to be the truth; that devotedness in the constant performance of duty; that temperance of his life, which enabled him at all times to give his mind and his faculties to the services which he was called on to perform; that regular, consistent, and unceasing piety by which he was distinguished at all times in his life: these are qualities that are attainable by others, and these are qualities which should not be lost as an example.'

The new Parliament, which had not strengthened the hands of the Government, assembled in November. A debate which opened on the 23rd demands some mention for its extraordinary incidents. Mr. Villiers proposed a resolution affirming that the improved condition of the people had been mainly owing to commercial legislation, and especially to the Act of 1846 for the free importation of foreign corn, and that the principle of Free Trade ought to be consistently extended and carried out. Mr. Disraeli regarded this motion as a vote of want of confidence, and in the course of the long discussion which ensued, accepted an amendment suggested by Lord Palmerston. Lord John Russell held that the real question at issue was Free Trade or Protection, and

the Peelites warmly vindicated the policy of their deceased leader. Mr. Villiers's motion was negatived by 336 to 256; and Lord Palmerston's amendment which affirmed that the principle of unrestricted competition, together with the abolition of protecting taxes, had diminished the cost and increased the supply of the chief articles of food, and so brought about the improved state of the country—was adopted by 468 to 53. During the debate, Mr. Disraeli whose power of forgetfulness of the past is one of the most fortunate ever conferred upon a statesman—declared that the main reason why his party had opposed Free Trade was not that it would injure the landlord, nor the farmer, but that 'it would prove injurious to the cause of labour.' He also added, amidst exclamations of astonishment and cries of 'Oh, oh!' that 'not a single attempt had been made in the House of Commons to abrogate the measure of 1846. Mr. Bright and others having spoken, Mr. Sidney Herbert—whose chivalrous spirit had been wounded to the quick by the assaults on Sir Robert Peel rose to defend the great Conservative statesman. His speech contained one passage of scathing invective addressed to Mr. Disraeli. After expressing his admiration for Sir Robert Peel as a politician and a political leader, and his love for the man, Mr. Herbert continued, 'I don't confound hon. gentlemen opposite with those who calumniated Sir Robert Peel. I recollect, even at the moment when party strife was embittered to the uttermost, when men's passions

rose high, when great disappointment was felt at the course Sir Robert Peel had taken-even at that moment there were hon. gentlemen opposite who continued a general support to his Government, and who never, when they opposed this very bill, either threw a doubt upon his motives or assailed his integrity. I say, then, that the memory of Sir Robert Peel requires no vindication—his memory is embalmed in the grateful recollection of the people of this country; and I say, if ever retribution is wanted —for it is not words that humiliate, but deeds—if a man wants to see humiliation, which God knows is always a painful sight, he need but look there!'—and upon this Mr. Herbert pointed with his finger to Mr. Disraeli, sitting on the Treasury Bench. The sting of invective is truth, and Mr. Herbert certainly spoke daggers if he 'used none;' yet the Chancellor of the Exchequer sat impassive as a Sphinx. There were those even upon the Government benches who admitted the truth of the charges which called forth Mr. Herbert's dramatic condemnation.\*

Early in December, Mr. Disraeli, in an exhaustive speech extending over five hours and a quarter, brought forward his budget. Its leading features may be shortly

<sup>\*</sup> In 1846, 1849, and 1850, on four or five distinct occasions, Mr. Disraeli declared the Free Trade policy of Sir Robert Peel a failure, and in one of his speeches he described that statesman's career as 'one great appropriation clause.' Mr. Bernal Osborne expressed his astonishment that Mr. Disraeli, 'in a November session in 1852, and with a face which he never saw equalled in the theatre, dared to tell the House that he had never attempted to reverse the policy of Free Trade!'

indicated. It proposed to remit a portion of the taxes upon malt, tea, and sugar; and, in order to counterbalance these losses to the revenue, the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed to extend the incometax to funded property and salaries in Ireland, and to fix the point of exemption on industrial incomes at £100 a year, and on incomes from property at £50, the rate in Schedules A and C being as before 7d. in the pound, and in B, D, and E 51d. It was, moreover, proposed to extend the house-tax to houses rated at £10 a year and upwards, instead of £20, as well as to increase the rate of the assessment. Private houses then paid 9d. and shops 6d. in the pound; and Mr. Disraeli proposed that the former should pay 1s. 6d. and the latter 1s. The tax would then amount in the whole to about £150,000 a year less than the window duty. To meet the extra expenditure of £2,100,000, the Chancellor would have half a year's income-tax, £2,500,000. He calculated that in 1854-55 there would be a loss arising from the various remissions, together with an increase of £600,000 in the estimates, of £3,587,000, while the Ways and Means would amount to £3,510,000.

Both the exemptions and remissions in this budget excited great opposition, and Mr. Gladstone, in a speech which extracted admiration for its energy and luminosity—but which was also regarded by some as almost too bitter and pungent—fiercely assailed the scheme. The debate was prolonged over several sittings, and towards its

conclusion Mr. Disraeli, in reply, attacked several members of the House, but especially Sir James Graham, with unusual acerbity. In rebuking him, Mr. Gladstone began by telling the right hon. gentleman that he was not entitled to charge with insolence men of as high position and of as high character in the House as himself. Having been prevented by the cheers of the House from completing this sentence, Mr. Gladstone thus concluded:—'I must tell the right hon. gentleman that he is not entitled to say to my right hon. friend, the member for Carlisle, that he regards but does not respect him. And I must tell him that whatever else he has learnt—and he has learnt much—he has not learnt to keep within those limits of discretion, of moderation, and of forbearance that ought to restrain the conduct and language of every member in this House, the disregard of which, while it is an offence in the meanest amongst us, is an offence of tenfold weight when committed by the leader of the House of Commons.' The whole debate was conducted with an exceptional amount of personal feeling on both sides of the House. Mr. Gladstone insisted that the income-tax was the first question to be discussed, inasmuch as the Government proposed its reconstruction as well as its extension; but he condemned the whole financial scheme as unsound and delusive, and if the House gave it its sanction, he predicted that the day would come when the vote would be looked back upon with bitter but ineffectual repentance.

That day, however, was destined never to appear, a result chiefly due to Mr. Gladstone's opposition to the Government proposals. His crushing expose of the blunders of the budget was almost ludicrous in its completeness, and it was universally felt that the scheme could not survive his brilliant onslaught.

The resolution respecting the house duty was put to the vote on the 15th of December, when the numbers were—For the Government, 286; against, 305—majority against the Ministry, 19. From this debate may be said to date that actual and formal political antagonism between Lord Beaconsfield and Mr. Gladstone whose record now extends over a generation. It may have been foreshadowed in previous debates, but it was the session of 1852 which first witnessed these distinguished statesmen pitted against each other as political leaders and rivals.

Lord Derby resigned in consequence of the defeat on the budget, and the Earl of Aberdeen was called upon to form a Ministry. There was but one possible Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Gladstone, and he accordingly acceded to the office. Re-elections were necessary in the case of those members of the new Ministry who had seats in the House of Commons, and Mr. Gladstone again appealed to his University to return him, and endorse his acceptance of office under the Earl of Aberdeen. But the right hon, gentleman speedily discovered that he had made many enemies by his obvious tendencies

towards Liberal-Conservatism. He had given decisive indications that he held less firmly the old traditions of that unbending Toryism of which he was once the most promising representative. Mr. Gladstone's seat at Oxford was accordingly warmly contested.

In the outset, some difficulty was experienced in procuring a candidate of strong Conservative prin-The Marquis of Chandos was first applied to, but he declined to oppose Mr. Gladstone, and at length an opponent was found in Mr. Dudley Perceval, of Christ Church, son of the Right Hon. Spencer Perceval. The nomination took place on the 4th of January. Mr. Gladstone was proposed by Dr. Hawkins, Provost of Oriel, and Mr. Perceval by Archdeacon Denison. In accordance with custom at University elections, neither candidate was present. The opposition to the Chancellor of the Exchequer was based chiefly on his votes on ecclesiastical questions, and on his acceptance of office in a hybrid Ministry. Times, writing sarcastically of Mr. Perceval, described him as 'a very near relative of our old friend Mrs. Harris. To remove any doubt on this point, let him be exhibited at Exeter Hall, with documentary evidence of his name, existence, and history; his First-class, his defeat at Finsbury, his "talents," his principles. If we must go to Oxford to record our votes, it would at least be something to know that we were voting against a real man, and not a mere name.' The Morning Chronicle affirmed that a section of the Carlton Club were 'making a tool of the Oxford Convocation for the purposes of the meanest and smallest political rancour against Mr. Gladstone.'

Two days after the nomination, the Chancellor of the Exchequer wrote the following letter to the Chairman of his Election Committee:—'Unless I had as full and clear conviction that the interests of the Church, whether as relates to the legislative functions of Parliament, or the impartial and wise recommendation of fit persons to her Majesty for high ecclesiastical offices, were at least as safe in the hands of Lord Aberdeen as in those of Lord Derby (though I would on no account disparage Lord Derby's personal sentiments towards the Church), I should not have accepted office under Lord Aberdeen. As regards the second, if it be thought that during twenty years of public life, or that during the latter part of them, I have failed to give guarantees of attachment to the interests of the Church—to such as so think I can offer neither apology nor pledge. To those who think otherwise, I tender the assurance that I have not by my recent assumption of office made any change whatever in that particular, or in any principles relating to it.' The poll lasted for fifteen days, and at its close Mr. Gladstone was found to have been returned by a substantial majority. The numbers were—Gladstone, 1,022; Perceval, 898—majority, 124. Mr. Gladstone had large majorities in Christ Church, Balliol, and Exeter; Mr. Perceval had small majorities in Queen's, New, St. John's, Wadham, and Magdalen Hall. Of Professors, 74 voted for Mr. Gladstone,

and only 15 for Mr. Perceval, while 12 were neutral.

On the assembling of Parliament, the Earl of Aberdeen announced in the House of Lords that the measures of the Government would be both Conservative and Liberal, for both were necessary. At home, their mission would be to maintain and extend Free Trade principles, and to pursue the commercial and financial system of the late Sir Robert Peel. With regard to foreign affairs, it was their earnest desire to secure the general peace of Europe, without any relaxation of the defensive measures which had lately been undertaken.

Before introducing his budget, on the 8th of April Mr. Gladstone unfolded his scheme for the reduction of the National Debt. This took the form of fifteen resolutions, divided into three parts. The funded debt stood in 1852 at £765,126,582, and the unfunded debt at £17,742,800. By the Chancellor's first operation, he proposed to liquidate a number of minor stocks, including the Bank annuities of 1726, the three per cent. annuities of 1751, and the South Sea stock and annuities. These stocks furnished a total amount of £9,500,000, and, being different in denomination, needlessly complicated the debt. He offered to convert the stocks into new securities, or to pay them off, at the option of the holders; and he calculated that on the former process, by the reduction of a quarter per cent. in the interest, a permanent saving would be effected of £25,000 per annum, while if the stocks were paid off altogether, the saving would be far greater. By the second series of resolutions, Mr. Gladstone proposed to deal with the Exchequer bonds in such a manner as to secure a saving of one per cent. Thirdly, he desired 'to effect the voluntary commutation of the three per cent. consols and the three per cent. reduced, amounting altogether to £500,000,000, into one or other of two new stocks which he proposed to create, and which would be as like each other as possible in their conditions, so that the fund-holders would probably be induced to take portions of both.'

These resolutions were not only supported by the general adherents of the Government, but also by the most prominent Radical members in the House, and in the end were adopted. That the new Finance Minister had not miscalculated the advantages of his scheme is shown by the fact that after it came into operation, and before the outbreak of the Crimean war, the debt had been reduced by no less a sum than £11,533,581. At the commencement of 1854 the funded debt of the country stood at £755,311,701; and the unfunded debt at £16,024,100.

On the 18th of April the House of Commons listened spell-bound to the details of a budget which, for statesmanlike breadth of conception, had, perhaps, never been surpassed, and has not since been equalled. Mr. Gladstone spoke for five hours with the greatest case and perspicuity, and without begetting in the minds of his audience the slightest feeling of ennui. Even while dealing with the most abstruse financial

details, the orator's command of language never failed him. A contemporary writer states that he never once paused for a word during the whole of the five hours, and awards to him the palm of an unsurpassed fluency and a choice diction. 'The impression produced upon the minds of the crowded and brilliant assembly by Mr. Gladstone's evident mastery and grasp of the subject was, that England had at length found a skilful financier, upon whom the mantle of Peel had descended. The cheering when the right hon. gentleman sat down was of the most enthusiastic and prolonged character, and his friends and colleagues hastened to tender him their warm congratulations upon the distinguished success he had achieved in his first budget.' When the louder plaudits had subsided, a hum of approbation still went round the House, and extended even to the fair occupants of the ladies' gallery.

Mr. Gladstone began his statement by submitting to the committee the account of the country. The revenue, he observed, had been estimated by Mr. Disraeli at £51,625,000, but at the termination of the financial year it was actually no less than £53,089,000, showing an increase of £1,464,000. The expenditure, which had been estimated at £51,163,000, had only reached £50,782,000; so that altogether there was a surplus of income over expenditure to the amount of £2,460,000. But it would be a precipitate inference to conclude that the whole of this amount was available for the remission of taxation. No less than

£1,400,000, or nearly three-fifths of the surplus, had already been disposed of by votes of the House for the defence of the country, and by the charges on account of miscellaneous services. After all necessary deductions, and making allowance for fluctuations in the revenue, there would only be a balance of £700,000. The total estimated expenditure for 1853-54 was £52,183,000; and the total estimated income for the year £52,990,000. Mr. Gladstone then proceeded to state that the relief desired by the West Indian interest could not be granted, nor could any change in the law be proposed in the nature of an equalisation of spirit duties as between colonial and domestic produce.

Anticipating the most striking passages of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's exposition, it will be convenient here to summarise the leading features of the budget. The surplus in round numbers—without making allowance for uncertainties in revenueamounted to £805,000. This it was proposed to increase to £2,149,000, by the imposition of new taxes estimated to yield £1,344,000 during the current year, but whose ultimate production was anticipated to be as follows:—Extension of income-tax to all incomes between £100 and £150 per annum, at the rate of 5d. per pound, £250,000; extension of income-tax to Ireland, £460,000—giving (after deducting the loss by exemption on account of life assurance) a net increase in the income-tax of £590,000; extension of legacy duty to real property, £2,000,000; increase in

spirit duties, £436,000; and increase in alteration from scale of licences to brewers and dealers in tea, coffee, tobacco, and soap, £113,000. But from the total gain of £3,139,000, was to be deducted the interest upon £4,000,000, the amount of the debt due from Ireland in connection with the establishment of the Poor Law system and the visitation of the famine, which it was proposed entirely to forego, and for which she had hitherto been liable to an annual charge of £245,000. Taking the other side of the account, the intended reduction of taxation was as follows:—Abolition of the soap tax, £1,126,000; reduction of the duty on life assurance, £29,000; reduction in the scale of receipt stamps, £155,000; reduction of duty on indentures of apprenticeship, attorneys' certificates, and articles of apprenticeship, £50,000; reduction of advertisement duty, and abolition of stamp duties upon newspaper advertisement supplements, £160,000; reduction of duty on hackney carriages, £26,000; reduction of tax on men-servants, £87,000; reduction of tax on private carriages, £95,000; reduction of tax on horses and ponies (less alteration of duty on dogs), £108,000; alteration in the post-horse duties, £54,000; reduction of colonial postage to a uniform rate of sixpence, £40,000; reduction of the tea duty (which was ultimately to descend to one shilling), £3,000,000; reduction of duties on apples, cheese, &c., £262,000; reduction of duties on one hundred and thirty-three minor articles of food, £70,000; and abolition of duties on one hundred and twenty-three other minor

articles of food, £53,000. Speaking in round numbers, the total amount of relief by these reductions was £5,300,000, though for the actual financial year it was limited to £2,568,000. The loss to the revenue, after allowing for increased consumption, was thus £1,656,000. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in order to meet this loss, proposed new taxes for the same period which would yield £1,344,000, making with the surplus already calculated of £805,000, an available aggregate of £2,149,000. Consequently, on the 5th of April, 1854, a favourable balance of £493,000 was still to be anticipated. Nor were these various estimates at all sanguine, judging from the actual financial condition of the country. But they dipped too deeply into the future. In 1854, the balance between the taxes imposed and those taken off would give an additional £220,000 in favour of the country; while between that period and 1860, when the £6,140,000 of income-tax was to be surrendered, the saving from the reduction of the three-anda-quarter per cents. and the lapse of the long annuities, and of a large amount of terminable annuities, would have been sufficient to render its re-imposition unnecessary. But more than this; arguing from past experience, the revenue would have entirely recovered itself, so that the savings, as they accrued, would be applicable to new reductions. These bright financial prospects were, unfortunately, doomed to be clouded by events which even the most sagacious could scarcely at this time be expected to foresee.

The most masterly and effective portion of Mr. Gladstone's speech was that in which he dealt with the income-tax. He reminded the House of what this tax had done for the country in times of national emergency and peril, and asked them to consider what it might do again, if it pleased God that those times of peril should return. 'It was in the crisis of the revolutionary war that, when Mr. Pitt found the resources of taxation were failing under him, his mind fell back upon the conception of the income-tax; and when he proposed it to Parliament, that great man, possessed with his great idea, raised his eloquence to an unusual height and power.' The speaker then briefly sketched the results which had been achieved by this colossal engine of finance, which was in full ' force from 1806 to 1815. The average annual expenses of war and government during these years, together with the charge upon the debt contracted before 1793, was £65,794,000; while, in consequence of the income-tax, the revenue of the country (which before 1798 amounted only to £20,626,000) amounted to £63,790,000. The deficiency was thus reduced from fifteen millions, or thereabouts, to two millions. After citing some other figures, showing the potency of the income-tax as a means of raising money, Mr. Gladstone dwelt upon the great ends it had answered in times of war, and then examined the composition of the tax, as well as the charge that gross inequality was its leading characteristic. As to the questions raised by the two classes of payers, the owners of

land and houses and those engaged in trade, he would pass by the inquiry whether there ought to be any difference whatever between the two classes; but he conclusively showed that, according to a rational estimate, land paid at that moment ninepence and trade sevenpence in the pound; and he asked any moderate man whether, if he were now about to establish a different rate of payment between the two classes, he would think of making the difference greater than it existed at that moment? The speaker entered his protest against the averaging of classes, stating that some trades were worth twenty-five years' purchase, while others were not worth more than five, four, or three years' purchase. How were they to average the interest of a trade worth three and another worth twenty-five years' purchase? As regarded the state of the case between land and trade, there was no sufficient ground to attempt the reconstruction of the income-tax. Her Majesty's Government were opposed to the breaking-up of the tax; such a policy would inevitably lead them into a quagmire. To relinquish it was altogether safe, because it was altogether honourable; but to break it up was to encourage the House of Commons to venture upon schemes which might look well on paper, and were calculated to serve the purpose of the moment, but which would end in the destruction of the tax by the absurdities and iniquities which they involved. The Government, while recognising the fact that the income-tax was an engine of gigantic power for great national purposes,

were of opinion, from the circumstances attending its operation, that it was perhaps impossible, and certainly not desirable, to maintain it as a portion of the permanent and ordinary finances of the country. Its inequality was a fact important in itself; the inquisition it entailed was a most serious disadvantage; and the frauds to which it led were evils which it was not possible to characterise in terms too strong. 'Depend upon it, when you come to close quarters with this subject, when you come to measure and see the respective relations of intelligence and labour and property, and when you come to represent these relations in arithmetical results, you are undertaking an operation which I should say it was beyond the power of man to conduct with satisfaction, but which, at any rate, is an operation to which you ought not constantly to recur; for if, as my hon. friend once said very properly, this country could not bear a revolution once a year, I will venture to say that it could not bear a reconstruction of the income-tax once a year. Whatever you do in regard to the incometax you must be bold, you must be intelligible, you must be decisive. You must not palter with it. If you do, I have striven at least to point out as well as my feeble powers will permit the almost desecration I would say, certainly the gross breach of duty to your country, of which you will be found guilty, in thus jeopardising one of the most valuable among all its material resources. I believe it to be of vital importance, whether you keep this tax or whether you

part with it, that you should either keep it or leave it in a state in which it would be fit for service in an emergency, and that it will be impossible to do if you break up the basis of your income-tax.'

Mr. Gladstone next observed that what the Government wished to do was to put an end to the uncertainty that prevailed respecting the income-tax, and to take effectual measures to mark the tax as a temporary one. In detailing the proposed modes of its future operation, he was met with signs of dissatisfaction from the Opposition benches, for which, however, he declared himself prepared. The Government proposition was to renew the income-tax for two years, from April, 1853, to April, 1855, at the rate of 7d. in the pound. From April, 1855, it would be enacted for two more years at 6d. in the pound, and then for three more years from April, 1857, at 5d. Under this proposal the income-tax would expire on the 5th of April, 1860. The means were then detailed for creating a fund by which, in conjunction with the existing surplus, an extensive and beneficial remission of taxes might be accomplished. The various items of increase and reduction in taxation have already been given, and we will therefore only add the conclusion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's memorable speech:—

'If the Committee have followed me, they will understand that we stand on the principle that the income-tax ought to be marked as a temporary measure; that the public feeling that relief should be given to intelligence and skill as compared with property ought to be met, and may be met; that the income-tax in its operation ought to be mitigated by every

rational means, compatible with its integrity, and, above all, that it should be associated in the last term of its existence, as it was in the first, with those remissions of indirect taxation which have so greatly redounded to the profit of this country, and have set so admirable an example—an example that has already in some quarters proved contagious to other nations of the earth. These are the principles on which we stand, and the figures. I have shown you that if you grant us the taxes which we ask, the moderate amount of £2,500,000 in the whole, and much less than that sum for the present year, you, or the Parliament which may be in existence in 1860, will be in the condition, if you so think fit, to part with the incometax. I am almost afraid to look at the clock, shamefully reminding me, as it must, how long I have trespassed on the time of the House. All I can say in apology is, that I have endeavoured to keep closely to the topics which I had before me—

"— immensum spatiis confecimus æquor, Et jam tempus equum fumantia solvere colla."

These are the proposals of the Government. They may be approved, or they may be condemned, but I have this full confidence, that it will be admitted that we have not sought to evade the difficulties of the position; that we have not concealed those difficulties either from ourselves or from others; that we have not attempted to counteract them by narrow or flimsy expedients; that we have prepared plans which, if you will adopt them, will go some way to close up many vexed financial questions, which, if not now settled, may be attended with public inconvenience, and even with public danger, in future years and under less favourable circumstances; that we have endeavoured, in the plans we have now submitted to you, to make the path of our successors in future years not more arduous, but more easy; and I may be permitted to add that, while we have sought to do justice to the great labour community of England by furthering their relief from indirect taxation, we have not been guided by any desire to put one class against another. We have felt we should best maintain our own honour, that we should best meet the views of Parliament, and best promote the interests of the country, by declining to draw any invidious distinction between class and class, by adopting it to ourselves as a sacred aim to diffuse and distribute the burdens with equal and impartial hand; and we have the consolation of believing that by proposals such as these we contribute, as far as in us lies, not only to develop the material resources of the country, but to knit the various parts of this great nation yet more closely than ever to that Throne and to those institutions under which it is our happiness to live.'

When the long-continued cheering which followed

this speech had subsided, the feeling of admiration for the brilliant manner in which the budget had been propounded was succeeded by one of speculation upon its advantages and disadvantages. Members required time to grasp the details of so comprehensive a scheme. Mr. Hume alluded to the extensive changes proposed, and although he rejoiced over one great resolve manifested in the statement—the determination to carry out the principles of Free Trade—he regretted the manner in which the question of the income-tax had been taken up. The Government allowed some days for the House to digest the propositions of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and on the 25th of April they came on for discussion.

The first question raised was that of the incometax. Sir E. Bulwer Lytton proposed an amendment to the effect that the continuance of the income-tax, with its extension to classes which had hitherto been exempt from its operation, was alike unjust and impolitic. The debate that ensued was very animated. Mr. Cobden, and Mr. Hume also, wished for such a reduction in the expenditure of the country as would render the objectionable impost unnecessary. Cardwell maintained that the scheme was replete with comfort and happiness to the people, and Mr. Lowe said that it was conceived in no servile spirit. Mr. Disraeli supported the amendment on the ground that the proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer added to the burdens on land, while they lightened those which pressed on particular classes. He held that such privileged classes were always a source of the greatest danger to a nation, and for himself he could see no difference between a privileged noble and a privileged tobacconist. The right hon. gentleman took the opportunity of attacking Lord John Russell, whom he charged with having thrown over the Whig party, and with having accepted a subordinate office under former subordinate officers of Sir Robert Peel. Lord John Russell, in his reply, showed the inconsistency of Mr. Disraeli in supporting an amendment which left the burdens on land just where they were, and lowered the rate of tax in favour of trades and professions. He concluded with a panegyric upon Mr. Gladstone, who, he said, was to be envied amongst English Finance Ministers. If, in order to achieve his ends, it had been his fortune to live before his age, his lordship trusted he would find his reward in the approbation and support of the House, and in the gratitude of an admiring people. On a division being taken, the numbers were-For the Government plan, 323; against, 252—majority for Ministers, 71. The defeat of Sir E. Bulwer Lytton's amendment was a virtual endorsement of the budget. It was now safe in its main features, and it finally passed the House of Commons on the 27th of June.

It is seldom that a venture of such magnitude as Mr. Gladstone's first budget meets with unequivocal success. But from the outset the plan was received with unusual favour; and, being 'supported by a strong majority in-doors, and wafted forwards by a

favourable breeze of popular confidence from without, it was carried over all opposition, with such modifications only as its author saw reason to admit. It was felt by all classes of persons throughout the country that its financial operations were now directed by a master-hand; that the work which Peel had so ably commenced was being carried out by Gladstone, not in a spirit of servile imitation, but with a bold originality of conception, and a happy force and eloquence of expression, which placed him fully on a level with the lamented statesman whose work he was successfully endeavouring to complete. The people therefore submitted cheerfully to the burden of a heavy and oppressive tax, in the full conviction that the continuance of it was necessary in order to enable the Chancellor of the Exchequer to place the national finances on a footing which would increase the wealth and well-being of all classes of the people.' \*

The satisfaction with which the budget was received by the House was echoed by the press and the country generally. Mr. Gladstone had not only conceived a scheme for the reduction of the National Debt, whereby the heavy burdens which accrued during Mr. Pitt's time should be successfully attacked; but it was shown with regard to his budget proposals that, notwithstanding the increased taxation, a man with, say, £120 per annum, was really better off through these changes, in consequence of the remissions upon a

<sup>\*</sup> The History of England from the Year 1830. By the Rev. W. N. Molesworth, M.A.

vast number of articles of daily consumption, and the total abolition of the duty upon others. whole scheme was regarded as the most able, farsighted, and practicable of financial measures since Sir Robert Peel's famous budget of 1844. Mr. Gladstone, in his plan, laid aside all questions of party, and those alluring baits by which he might have acquired an unbounded popularity, and legislated for the whole country—for England in the future as well as in the present. The scheme first astonished, and then pleased and satisfied the people; and the unfortunate events which shortly afterwards transpired preventing the fruition of Mr. Gladstone's fiscal policy at this period—cannot deprive it of its high statesmanlike qualities. It demonstrated what marvellous results a capable financier could achieve under the régime of Free Trade.

## CHAPTER IX.

## THE CRIMEAN WAR.

Gathering of the Storm—Policy of the British Government—Lord John Russell's Despatch on the Holy Places—Russo-Turkish Negotiations—Mr. Gladstone on the Situation—The Czar's Manifesto—Fruitless Intervention of the Emperor Napoleon—War inevitable—Action of the Aberdeen Cabinet—Its Desire for Peace—National Sentiment for War—The Chancellor of the Exchequer's War Budget—Approved by the House—Great Britain and France declare War against Russia—Further Financial Proposals—Mr. Gladstone's Defence of his Scheme—It is assailed unsuccessfully by the Opposition—Prorogation of Parliament.

The year 1853 opened with the gathering of ominous clouds in the East. Englishmen look back to the stormy period which ensued with mixed feelings admiration for the bravery displayed by our gallant troops in the Crimea, and humiliation over the mistakes and disasters which attended the course of English policy. The Czar Nicholas was in the outset responsible for the bloodshed which followed, for the diplomatic acts of Russia left no doubt as to her ulterior designs upon Turkey. It is necessary to recapitulate briefly the events of this period in order to appreciate clearly Mr. Gladstone's attitude upon foreign affairs, and to ascertain the position assumed by the Government of which he was a member. The doctrine of British interests in the East is one of which we have heard a good deal in recent years, but to trace its

origin is a matter of superlative difficulty. Gladstone, however, must be held to be right in his contention that this doctrine of British interests, as involving the sole necessity of upholding the Ottoman Empire, in its perfect and complete integrity, was not the avowed doctrine of the British Government in the proceedings immediately anterior to the Crimean war. The support and countenance which Great Britain gave to Turkey would have been extended towards any other Power which had been unjustly menaced by a powerful neighbour. A wide difference of opinion has always existed, and always will exist, as to the precise grounds upon which England undertook the Crimean war. Some assert it to have been 'a war for British interests founded upon the traditional policy of maintaining the Porte, with all its crimes, in its "integrity and independence," as the proper bulwark of our own sway in India. Others have thought that we undertook the war upon a ground certainly more chivalrous; that, seeing a weaker country oppressed by a stronger one, we generously interfered on behalf of the weaker.' The truth may fairly be affirmed to lie in the blending of the two motives; for, as Mr. Gladstone has observed, 'unless the Sovereign and her Consort, with their matchless opportunities of knowledge, were absolutely blindfolded, the policy which led us into that war was that of repressing an offence against the public law of Europe, but only by the united authority of the Powers of Europe.' France, and subsequently Sardinia, joined with us in resisting a policy fraught with danger to the future peace of the Continent. The Prince Consort justly described the aim of the war to be that of putting a termination to a policy which not only threatened the existence of the Ottoman Empire, but, by making all the countries bordering on the Black Sea dependencies of Russia, seriously endangered the balance of power.

In January, 1853, Lord John Russell wrote his despatch on the subject of the Holy Places. The difficulties which had arisen with respect to these places already threatened disturbance to the peace of Europe, and they were the primal origin of the ensuing war. France and Russia were at this period at daggers drawn with regard to the question of ecclesiastical privileges at Jerusalem. Upon this particular difference, England was bound to admit that Russia had right on her side; but by-and-by the rift widened. At the beginning of June fruitless negotiations took place between Prince Menschikoff and the Porte as to the guarantees required by Russia in favour of the Greek Church. At their conclusion, the Prince insisted upon the concession to Russia of the protectorate and civil jurisdiction over the Greek subjects of the Porte. The Sultan returned a decided negative to this demand, and Prince Menschikoff departed for St. Petersburg. The Czar approved of all the acts of his representative, and sent an ultimatum to the Porte. Turkey still proved recalcitrant, and the Russian forces at once prepared to occupy the Danubian Principalities.

On the 2nd of July, negotiations having completely failed, the Russian tròops effected a double passage across the Pruth, taking simultaneous possession of the provinces of Moldavia and Wallachia. The Emperor Nicholas had prefaced this step by a manifesto stating that the occupation of these Principalities was indispensable to guarantee Russia the re-establishment of her rights, but that it was not to be considered as a declaration of war. It was still hoped that hostilities would be averted, but on the 4th of October London was startled by a telegraphic despatch announcing that the Sultan had formally declared war against Russia. On the 12th of the same month Mr. Gladstone attended the inauguration of a statue to Sir Robert Peel at Manchester. At this period of excitement, when meetings and conferences for and against war were already being held, it was natural, and indeed almost imperative, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should make some reference to the great question then agitating the public mind. He alluded to the designs of Russia, describing her as a Power which threatened to override all the rest, and to prove a source of danger to the peace of the world. This disastrous state of affairs would be precipitated by the overthrow of the Ottoman Empire, and against this result England had determined to set herself at whatever cost. Government did not desire war-a calamity which stained the face of nature with human gore, gave loose rein to crime, and took bread from the people. 'No doubt,' the speaker continued, 'negotiation is

repugnant to the national impatience at the sight of injustice and oppression; it is beset with delay, intrigue, and chicane; but these are not so horrible as war, if negotiation can be made to result in saving this country from a calamity which deprives the nation of subsistence, and arrests the operations of industry. To attain that result, if possible—still to attain it, if still possible, which is even yet their hope—her Majesty's Ministers have persevered in exercising that self-command and that self-restraint, which impatience may mistake for indifference, feebleness, or cowardice, but which are truly the crowning greatness of a great people, and which do not evince the want of readiness to vindicate, when the time comes, the honour of this country.' These weighty words emphatically prove that Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues did not contemplate entering upon the impending war with 'a light heart.' They felt profoundly the responsibility which threatened to devolve upon them. the popular voice was beginning to make itself heard, charged with indignation against Russia, and clamouring for active measures in support of Turkey.

One passage in this Manchester speech completely disproves the assertion, frequently made since 1876, that at the time of the Crimean war, Mr. Gladstone was a blind supporter either of Ottoman rule or of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire as such. He expressly stated that the Government were not engaged in maintaining the independence and integrity of the Ottoman Empire, as those words might be used

with reference to the integrity and independence of England or of France. He further referred to the anomalies of the Eastern Empire, the political solecism of a Mussulman faith exercising a dominion over twelve millions of our fellow-creatures, the weakness inherent in the nature of the Turkish Government, and the eventualities that surrounded the future of that dubious empire, though he added that these were not the things with which any British Government had then to deal. This much will, therefore, be allowed, that nearly a generation before the period of the 'Bulgarian atrocities,' Mr. Gladstone admitted and deplored the corruptions of the Turkish Government, and the anomalous relations existing between the Porte and its Christian subjects.

The Emperor of Russia issued a manifesto to his people on the 1st of November, 1854, declaring that he had earnestly sought for peace, but that, owing to the 'blind obstinacy' of the Ottoman Porte, war was forced upon him. Hostilities were shortly afterwards rapidly precipitated. A Note, proposed collectively by the European Powers to Russia, and known as the Vienna Note, was accepted by Russia; but being subsequently objected to by Turkey, the signatory Powers threw it over. Negotiations were then resumed, and towards the close of the year a new document, drawn up at Constantinople and approved by England and the other Powers, was presented to Russia. The Emperor Nicholas rejected this second Note in January, 1854, and in two months from that

time war was an actuality. In England, the press and the people, with few exceptions, were unanimous in their feeling of hostility to Russia. The Government was supported in its warlike resolution by a rush of national feeling and enthusiasm rarely exhibited. The allied fleets had already entered the Black Sea in the month of January, which also witnessed that execrable act on the part of the Russians known as the massacre of Sinope. The Czar cut the Gordian knot of a complicated series of negotiations by assuming a firm and resolute attitude, and on the 28th of March, England formally declared war against Russia.

A final effort to preserve peace had been made by the Emperor Napoleon, in a letter addressed to the Czar, and dated January 29th. This letter fully explained the position of France in the great European imbroglio which had arisen, and set forth the reasons why she would be compelled to act as the ally of England in the event of hostilities. The two Powers had assumed a protective but passive attitude towards Turkey, but the affair of Sinope forced them to take a more defined position. 'It was no longer our policy that received a check in that affair; it was our military honour. The cannon-shots of Sinope have echoed mournfully in the hearts of all those who, in England and in France, have a strong sense of the national Hence the order given to the allied squadrons to enter the Black Sea, to prevent—by force, if necessary—the recurrence of a similar event. The Emperor Napoleon went on to say that if

the Czar desired a pacific solution to the existing difficulties, an armistice might at once be signed, things could resume their diplomatic course, and all the belligerent forces could retire from the places whither motives of war had called them. But matters had gone too far for reasonable appeals of this kind. The Czar was obstinate, and a telegraphic despatch was received in Paris from the French representative at St. Petersburg, consisting of these few but ominous words, 'I return with refusal.' War was now inevitable, and the French became the warm and enthusiastic allies of England.

Some critics of the Aberdeen Ministry have severely condemned that Government for the course upon which it now entered. The members of the Peace Society were naturally foremost in their efforts to secure peace; and a deputation even went to St. Petersburg with a view of securing this object. It should be borne in mind, in estimating the responsibilities of Ministers at this period, that the tone of the public mind of England was hurrying them forward with surprising rapidity. Lord Aberdeen and Mr. Gladstone were both averse to war. The former had, indeed, a holy horror of war in the abstract, and as Mr. Kinglake has pointed out—he was especially averse to a war with Russia, not only by reason of the impressions of his early life, but because of the relations of mutual esteem which had long existed between the Emperor Nicholas and himself; he also anticipated evil to Europe by a forcible breaking up of the ties

established by the Congress of Vienna and riveted by the Peace of Paris. The Premier had, in fact, gone so far in the early stage of the Eastern difficulty as to resolve not to remain at the head of the Government unless he could maintain peace. The only phrase which can now be used to describe his policy at this period is that he 'drifted' into war. He did not wish it; he deplored it; and yet he was gradually borne on towards it, without being able to take the retrograde steps he desired. But there was also Mr. Gladstone, perhaps the next conspicuous member of his Cabinet, equally averse to war. On humanitarian as well as on national grounds, the Chancellor of the Exchequer was opposed to the arbitrament of arms. That war, moreover, was costly, and added greatly to the burdens of the people, was an argument to which he gave due weight, but he was still more deeply swayed by those loftier principles which made him ardently cling to the chances of peace. The brilliant historian of the Crimean war thus describes him at this period, and depicts the feelings with which the course of his immediate career was regarded by the country:—

<sup>&#</sup>x27;If he was famous for the splendour of his eloquence, for his unaffected picty, and for his blameless life, he was celebrated far and wide for a more than common liveliness of conscience. He had once imagined it to be his duty to quit a Government, and to burst through strong ties of friendship and gratitude, by reason of a thin shade of difference on the subject of white or brown sugar. It was believed that, if he were to commit even a little sin, or to imagine an evil thought, he would instantly arraign himself before the dread tribunal which awaited him within his own bosom; and that, his intellect being subtle and microscopic, and delighting in casuistry

and exaggeration, he would be likely to give his soul a very harsh trial, and treat himself as a great criminal for faults too minute to be visible to the naked eyes of laymen. His friends lived in dread of his virtues as tending to make him whimsical and unstable, and the practical politicians, perceiving that he was not to be depended upon for party purposes, and was bent upon none but lofty objects, used to look upon him as dangerous—used to call him behind his back a good man—a good man in the worst sense of the term.'\*

Here we have stated that view of Mr. Gladstone which has always been held by those politicians who are the disciples of the doctrine of expediency. Mr. Gladstone, from his earliest appearance in political life, has always thrown over the conventional doctrines of politics, when they threatened to interfere with his unswerving conscientiousness, and taken his stand upon what he believed to be the strict principles of right and justice. He has, of course, with other statesmen, made mistakes: cela va sans dire. In 1853 he reconciled these principles of right and justice with the dread necessity which had arisen in Europe. War, he came to see, was inevitable, and even peace-loving men must bow to a fate that is inexorable. There can be no doubt that the presence of Lord Aberdeen and Mr. Gladstone in the Cabinet was a guarantee that peace would be prolonged to the very utmost limit of time, and that only the gravest necessity would reconcile them to retaining office at this momentous period.

But in truth the question of peace or war had passed out of the hands of these statesmen, and of any individuals, however great their power. There was

<sup>\*</sup> The Invasion of the Crimea. By Alex. William Kinglake.

already felt the flow of a wave of public opinion which swept the Ministry onward. It was no longer a question whether war could be avoided—the people of England demanded it with a fervour and an unanimity rarely witnessed in the annals of the country. On the one great and broad principle of resistance to the threatened overwhelming power of Russia is that war now to be defended. It was a defensive war, undertaken in the interests of Europe, against the aggressive and domineering policy of the Cabinet of St. Petersburg. English statesmen regretted the necessity which drove England to assume the part of policeman in Europe, but the actual circumstances of the time, combined with the future prospects of the various European states—and especially those immediately concerned in the Eastern Question—demanded that she should not shirk her responsibilities. It is not upon England that the blame can fall for that terrible visitation of the Angel of Death (to borrow an image of Mr. Bright's), whose wings were shortly heard rustling upon the darkened horizon of eastern Europe. History has even now written with unerring finger the name of hini who lit the flame of carnage in Europe. And Providence ordained in this, as in other striking examples of unjust war levied in the course of the history of the human race, that—if not, literally, still in effect—he who took the sword should perish by the sword. The Emperor Nicholas, though he fell not upon the battle-field, is understood to have died of chagrin, and his end was undoubtedly

hastened by the disasters which befell his armies in the Crimea.

Mr. Gladstone has been so long known as a Minister who has uniformly desired the prosperity of his country, that we can well understand the poignant regrets he must have felt over the paralysation of British industry, and an arrested commercial progress, which were the natural result of a declaration of war. A war in which Russia and Turkey in the East, and England and France in the West, are concerned, must of necessity be fraught with serious consequences to the whole of Europe. No longer were smiling harvests to gladden the face of nature in those districts which formed the seat of war; the peasant from the fruitful fields of France was to leave his occupation, and exchange the cultivation of the arts of peace for those of war; the English toiler in docks, workshops, and factories was doomed to see the course of his labour arrested, and to hear his children cry for the bread which was ruthlessly destroyed by the devastating influence of war. Yet, though England foresaw the evils which must necessarily follow from the expected war, with one voice—scarcely broken by the cries of a small minority in favour of abstention —she called aloud for the chastisement of the disturber of the peace of Europe. Ministers could scarcely commit error in following the lead of a national sentiment so emphatically expressed; if they did, it is an error which history has already condoned, and as regards the individual members of Lord Aberdeen's

Cabinet, none can be found to challenge the disinterestedness and purity of their motives. To Mr. Gladstone himself the dire necessity must have seemed painfully hard. Instead of that relief of taxation to which he had looked forward, he was called upon to prepare a war budget. The increase of revenue which had unexpectedly fallen in, and which amounted to upwards of a million sterling, was alienated from its peaceful purposes, and in addition the Chancellor of the Exchequer found himself compelled to increase the income-tax, the spirit duties, and the malt tax. He had hoped to meet the popular wishes, moreover, by a remission of the sugar duty, but this financial boon must now be postponed. Faced by no ordinary difficulties, Mr. Gladstone's fertility in resource was again apparent at this juncture. He conceived a scheme by which the country should not be permanently burdened with the expenses of the impending war. Prince Albert, in a letter to Baron Stockmar, referred to this plan. Mr. Gladstone desired to pay for the war out of current revenue, provided it did not require more than ten millions sterling beyond the ordinary expenditure. In order to meet this extra charge, however, he had no option but to increase the taxes. Mr. Disraeli—in duty bound, perhaps, as the mouthpiece of a strong Opposition—propounded a different scheme. He desired to borrow, thus increasing the Debt; he was opposed to the imposition of any fresh taxes. 'The former course,' said the Prince Consort to his friend, 'is

manly, statesmanlike, and honest; the latter is convenient, cowardly, and perhaps popular.' But in a remarkable manner the people of England rose to the exigencies of the situation. They approved the plans of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, though fraught with temporary inconvenience. Mr. Gladstone had not misinterpreted the feeling of the country. It was ready to bear the burden which it in reality called down upon itself, and to meet, as they occurred, the expenses of the war. Never was patriotism more strongly displayed than at this period. A Minister may frequently acquire popularity by leaving to succeeding generations the discharge of those pecuniary liabilities which arise in connection with exceptional events. But Mr. Gladstone fought against this policy. Though, as he said, 'every good motive and every bad motive, combated only by the desire of the approval of honourable men and by conscientious rectitude every motive of ease, of comfort, and of certainty spring forward in his mind to induce a Chancellor of the Exchequer to become the first man to recommend a loan'—he resisted the temptation, and was rewarded by the support of Parliament and the country.

Under circumstances widely different, therefore, from those attending his first financial statement, Mr. Gladstone produced his budget of 1854. His prognostications of the previous year had been exceeded by the results of the revenue. He estimated the income for the year 1853-54—after all reductions

should have been effected—at £52,990,000. actual receipts were £54,025,000, showing an excess Moreover, not only did the revenue of £1,035,000. thus largely exceed the estimate, but the expenditure fell short of it by no less than £1,012,000, the two items together furnishing a surplus of £2,047,000. On the 6th of March the budget was introduced. The Chancellor of the Exchequer announced with regard to the estimate for the war in the East, that it was impossible to say it would suffice for the wants of the whole year. The measure which he then proposed was to vote for extraordinary military expenditure a sum of £1,250,000. There was a deficiency of nearly three millions to provide for, and even this did not exhaust the whole cost of the war. 'But while he hoped that this sum might be raised without returning to the higher duties on various articles which had recently been diminished, he urged strongly that it should not be raised by resorting to a loan, and so throwing the burden on posterity. Such a course was not required by the necessities of the country, and was therefore not worthy of its adoption. No country had played so much as England at this dangerous game of mortgaging the industry of future generations. It was right that those who make war should be prepared to make the sacrifices needed to carry it on; the necessity for so doing was a most useful check on mere lust of conquest, and would lead men to make war with the wish of realising the earliest prospects of an honourable peace.' Mr. Gladstone then went on

to speak generally of the war, and the following passage of his speech was warmly applauded:—

'We have entered upon a great struggle, but we have entered upon it under favourable circumstances. We have proposed to you to make great efforts, and you have nobly and cheerfully backed our proposals. You have already by your votes added nearly 40,000 men to the establishments of the country; and, taking into account changes that have actually been carried into effect with regard to the return of soldiers from the Colonies, and the arrangements which in the present state of Ireland might be made—but which are not made—with respect to the constabulary force. in order to render the military force disposable to the utmost possible extent, it is not too much to say that we have virtually an addition to the disposable forces of the country, by land and by sea, at the present moment, as compared with our position twelve months ago, to the extent of nearly 50,000 men. This looks like an intention to carry on your war with vigour, and the wish and hope of her Majesty's Government is, that that may be truly said of the people of England, with regard to this war which was, I am afraid, not so truly said of Charles II. by a courtly but great poet, Dryden—

> "He without fear a dangerous war pursues, Which without rashness he began before."

That, we trust, will be the motto of the people of England; and you have this advantage, that the sentiment of Europe, and we trust the might of Europe, is with you. These circumstances—though we must not be sanguine, though it would be the wildest presumption for any man to say, when the ravages of European war had once begun, where and at what point it would be stayed—these circumstances justify us in cherishing the hope that possibly this may not be a long war.'

The speaker held that there were economical reasons and also moral reasons why the House should adhere to the sound policy of raising the supplies within the year. Coming to the gist of his plan, the Government proposed, he said, to repair the deficiency of £2,840,000, and to provide a moderate margin besides, by increasing the income-tax by one-

half, levying the whole addition for and in respect of the first moiety of the year-in other words, to double the tax for the half-year. He took the amount of the income-tax for 1854-55 at £6,275,000; a moiety of that sum was £3,137,500; but, in the case of the income-tax, the cost of collection diminished in proportion as the amount increased, and he took the real moiety consequently at £3,307,000, which would make the whole produce of the income-tax £9,582,000. The aggregate income for 1854-55 would then amount to £56,656,000, and the expenditure being estimated at £56,186,000, a small surplus would be left of £470,000. Mr. Gladstone next announced a proposed financial reform of some importance to the commercial community. It was designed to abolish the distinction then existing between home and foreign drawn bills, making them pay the same rate of tax. As the additions to the revenue could not be realised before Christmas, whereas a large portion of the war expenditure must be provided for in the next quarter, he laid on the table of the House a resolution for a vote of £1,750,000 for an issue of Exchequer bills. This would enable the Government to provide for the interval. He did not anticipate that it would be necessary to exercise this permission to its full extent; but if it should be, the unfunded debt would only stand as it stood twelve months before, when its amount was £17,750,000, as compared with £16,000,000 for the current period.

In the course of the discussion which ensued,

Mr. Hume approved the principle that the revenue should be raised within the year, on the ground that those who had urged the Government to a war whose propriety could not be judged, should bear their share of its burdens. Mr. Disraeli announced that he should not oppose the vote, as the House was bound to support her Majesty in all just and necessary wars; but he protested against the doctrine that in a prolonged contest we should rely upon taxation alone to raise the requisite supplies, or that even in resorting to taxation it might not be necessary to rely upon indirect as well as upon direct taxation.

The resolution for doubling the income-tax was passed in the House of Commons, without discussion or division, on the 20th of March; but on the report being brought up the following day, an animated debate unexpectedly occurred. Sir H. Willoughby moved an amendment to the effect that the collection of the additional moiety extend over the whole year, and not be levied during the first half of the year. Sir F. Baring regarded the proposition involved in the budget as the best arrangement which could have been made; but Mr. Disraeli contended that the Government were justified in demanding increased taxes to provide for a war only upon the condition of proving that the war was unavoidable. This they had not done. He replied to the objection that no criticism should be pronounced on the Ministerial policy unless the critic were prepared to propose a vote of no confidence; and he urged that it

was apparent the Government had no confidence in the House, or even in themselves. He also contrasted the expressions of different Ministers at different times, to show how loose and conflicting had been their opinions on the great question of peace or war. The Opposition leader declared that the war had been brought about by this divergence of opinion. A united Cabinet would have averted it altogether; it was a coalition war.

Mr. Gladstone's reply to this speech was an obvious one. He observed that the omission, on the part of his rival, to propose a vote of want of confidence was defended upon the very grounds that should have prompted it; and he characterised the conclusion to which Mr. Disraeli had landed his argument as 'illogical and recreant.' He then vindicated at length his financial policy as regarded the reduction of interest on Exchequer bills, the conversion of stock, and the partial employment of the Treasury balances in buying up the public debt; concluding by explaining his motives in asking that the whole increase in the income-tax should be paid within the first six months. The amendment was negatived; the report of the resolution was agreed to, and a bill was ordered to be brought in. On the 30th of March the bill was read a third time, and passed by the House of Commons.

The Emperor of Russia having refused to return an answer to the demand made upon him by Great Britain and France to evacuate the Danubian Princi-

palities, the Allies (as we have seen) made a formal declaration of war on the 28th of March. British people entered upon the contest with hope and courage. Everything seemed to presage a speedy termination to the war; but it was discovered that the Emperor Nicholas was not so deficient in resources as had been represented. The conflict which had begun must necessarily be a protracted and an expensive one. There probably never was a Continental monarch—not even the first Napoleon—so execrated in England as the Czar, to crush whom English incometax payers now cheerfully contributed, at the rate of fourteenpence in the pound, to the National Ex-The two Houses of Parliament discussed her Majesty's Message on the 31st of March. Mr. Bright failed to impress the members of the Lower House with his arguments against the war, while Lord Palmerston roused the same audience to a high pitch of enthusiasm by his vindication of the policy which had been pursued by the Government, and by his review of the tremendous interests, national and European, which were at stake. Between the 8th of February and the 1st of May, some 25,000 English troops had been conveyed to their destination in the Crimea. Hostilities had commenced, and with a bitterness of feeling rarely paralleled in the annals of war.

The war thus initiated entailed on England an exceedingly heavy expenditure, and on the 8th of May accordingly the Chancellor of the Exchequer brought

forward additional proposals in connection with his war budget. Adverting to the necessity which had existed for demanding a doubled income-tax at a time when war was not declared, he said it was then impossible for the Government to form a trustworthy estimate of the expenses of the war. In moving his resolution for an increased income-tax, he had asked what was at the time known to be requisite, but had also guarded himself by stating that his demand was not adequate to the purposes of war. He now asked for the means of satisfactorily carrying on the struggle. Before unfolding his plans, Mr. Gladstone defended himself against the accusations of having mismanaged the unfunded debt, and of having made a bad bargain in paying off the holders of South Sea Stock. The new Navy, Army, and Ordnance Estimates, with an additional £500,000 for the militia, would, he said, absorb £6,000,000; but he had also to provide for charges as yet unknown, and should be compelled to ask for £6,850,000 in addition to what. had been already granted. This would have to be raised by taxation, and it was proposed to repeat the operation which had already been performed upon the income-tax. The former operations had yielded from this source £9,582,000, and the addition would give £3,250,000—in all, from this source, £12,832,000. This augmentation would be asked for the period of the war, and should it terminate—which he prayed God might grant—during the existence of the tax under the Act of 1853, the augmentation would cease.

In this way he calculated that two-thirds of the expenses would be provided for. Touching the remainder, there was some difficulty. Government could not propose any other direct tax, neither could they resort to the assessed taxes. As regarded indirect taxes, they had resolved not to alter the system of postage, which had been so prosperous and beneficial. Nor did Government intend to reimpose taxes which had been taken off. They must go to the consumer in the least oppressive and injurious way. It was proposed to repeat the operation of last year on Scotch and Irish spirits, and to augment the duty in Scotland by 1s. per gallon, and in Ireland by 8d. This would be a gain to the Exchequer of £450,000. By a new classification of the sugar duties, £700,000 would be raised. When Mr. Gladstone proceeded to announce that it was proposed to augment the duty on malt, considerable sensation was apparent amongst the Opposition, who gave expression to their disapprobation. The speaker, however, went on to say that he considered we might fairly come upon the wealthy for the first charges of the war, but that a national war ought to be borne by all classes. The malt tax pressed on all, and as it was easily collected, and required no increased staff for the purpose, it seemed to fulfil the conditions which should be sought for. The malt tax stood, in round figures, at 2s. 9d. per bushel, and he proposed to raise it to 4s., which would still leave it lower than it was in 1810, and less than half what it was from 1804 to 1816, during the great war

struggle. Taking the consumption at forty million bushels, this would give £2,450,000. The united amounts thus to be obtained by increased incometax, spirit duty, sugar duty, and malt duty would be £6,850,000, which was the required sum. Gladstone next stated that it was necessary to have a resource for extraordinary contingencies, and for a possible rapid increase in the rate of war expenditure. He explained and vindicated his policy with regard to the issue of Exchequer bonds, and unfolded his plan for providing the further interim funds which would be required. He would take authority to confirm the contracts for the Exchequer bonds of the Class A, and power to issue a second series. He would also take power to issue two millions of Exchequer bills, and so many more as should not be taken on the four millions of Exchequer bonds. This would give a command of £5,500,000, and the total sum of £66,746,000 of revenue, set against £63,039,000 of expenditure, would show for the year a margin which he would for safety put at three millions and a half.

Such is a digest of Mr. Gladstone's proposals in this urgent financial crisis, and after stating the mode of proceeding with his plan, the Chancellor of the Exchequer turned to answer the charges made by the opponents of the Government. 'It was hardly necessary,' he observed, 'to meet the absurd accusation of want of foresight as to the inevitability of war, or to defend themselves for having believed that a Sovereign of Europe was a man of honour; but he met the

equally ridiculous charge of having abandoned public revenue, by asking in what state Government had found the revenue when the income-tax itself was in peril, because Mr. Disraeli had thought it consistent with his duty to his Sovereign and his country to promise a remodelling of that tax without having formed any plan for the purpose. The man who did that was the one who surrendered public revenue.' Mr. Gładstone claimed that the Government had re-established that tax; and he thanked the House for the aid of its generous confidence, whereby various financial reforms had been secured. He concluded by justifying himself at length for rejecting the counsel which had recommended a loan for the expenses of the war. Recapitulating the history of Mr. Pitt's enormous and costly loans, he warned the House against the system, advising Parliament to struggle against it as long as Mr. Pitt himself, he added, discovered his error, and afterwards made gallant efforts to redeem it. While the Duke of Wellington, in the great wars at the commencement of the century, was covering the name of England with fresh glories, our fathers were making noble struggles to bear the current expenses of the war; and he wished his hearers to show themselves worthy of such sires. The country was at that moment prosperous, and could afford some sacrifice. The Minister observed finally that such was the vigour, and such the elasticity of our trade, that even under the disadvantages of a bad harvest, and under the pressure of war, the imports from day to

day, and almost from hour to hour, were increasing, and the very last papers laid on the table showed that within the closing three months of the year there were £250,000 increase in the exports. In view of these circumstances, and while the effects of the war had not as yet seriously touched the people, Mr. Gladstone was fully justified—in the opinion of most critics of his financial policy—in proposing that the expenses of the war should be met as they were incurred.

The speech in which these proposals were made occupied three hours and a half; at its conclusion the Opposition chiefs were evidently taken by surprise. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had not only regaled the House with his accustomed eloquence, but had sketched a bold and masterly financial policy. Mr. Disraeli agreed to the resolutions only on the understanding that a full opportunity should be afforded for the discussion of the principle embodied in them. On the following Monday, May 15th, on the order for the second reading of the Excise Duties (Malt and Spirits) Bill, Mr. Cayley moved to defer the second reading for six months. A discussion ensued, in which the Government policy was severely criticised by Sir E. Bulwer Lytton, Sir John Pakington, and others. Lord John Russell replied in very pointed and effective style. The question before the House was, whether, when a formidable military Power threatened to swallow up one of our Allies, one shilling and threepence a bushel upon malt was too

great a sacrifice. 'Don't tell me,' said his lordship, 'that the tax is so objectionable that you are ready to vote any other, and that the landed interest will resist this small addition to the malt duty; tell me not that this is really the obstacle which prevents you from supporting the Government, but that, although you are in favour of the war, you are not ready to vote the necessary supplies.' Mr. Disraeli replied, saying that he still supported the policy of the war, but that he objected to this tax, not merely because it was unjust and unnecessary, but because it hampered the industry, crippled the progress, and in every way injured the agricultural interest of this country. The division list showed the temper of the House, and its determination to uphold the Government, Mr. Cayley's amendment being negatived by 303 votes against 195.

A sharp passage of arms occurred between Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Disraeli a few days afterwards. On the motion for going into Committee of Ways and Means (Exchequer bonds), the Chancellor of the Exchequer explained the situation in which previous votes of the House had left the financial policy of the Government. The expenditure had been authorised by decisive votes, and the House had also formally agreed to the ways and means by which it was to be raised. He now took the opinion of the House on the single question, how the ready money that was wanted should be obtained. The question turned simply upon the alternative whether it was most expedient to

resort to an issue of Exchequer bills, or authenticate the Ministerial project of Exchequer bonds. upon Mr. Disraeli rose to his feet, and, amid the cheers of his supporters, charged the Ministry with sharp practice. They had taken votes on the plea of administrative convenience, and these votes they now accounted decisive, thus taking from the House the opportunity of deciding upon the principle involved. Mr. Gladstone replied that ample opportunity would be afforded for discussing the principles embodied in the resolutions. On the resolution empowering the Government to issue £2,000,000 of Exchequer bonds being put from the chair, Mr. T. Baring moved an amendment declaring that 'it was not expedient at present to authorise any further issue of Exchequer bonds with the engagement of repayment within the next six years.' At the conclusion of the debate which ensued, Mr. Disraeli again assailed the financial policy of the Government. They had committed blunders, he held, out of which the present difficulties had grown. Inaccurate and deceptive statements had been made in successive budgets, fallacious estimates were given of the costs of the war, and delusive announcements hazarded regarding the aids that would be required to meet the growing charges upon the revenue. 'At last a continuance of mismanagement had culminated in the necessity for a loan of six millions; and this loan, in its turn, was so mismanaged that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had offered four per cent. for the money, and yet could

not get it. He had shown himself incompetent to deal with the bulls and bears, and had been forced to appeal to the stags of the Stock Exchange. And now came a last shift for raising a loan in masquerade.' Mr. Gladstone replied to these charges seriatim, carrying the sympathies of his followers warmly with him. Having dealt with the allegations of the Opposition leader, he declared that he stood by the budget, acknowledged the loyal spirit in which the country responded to the calls being made upon it for increased resources, and attributed the ability to answer those calls in great measure to the ease and prosperity derived from judicious legislation in former years. was the Opposition who had really been advocates of the borrowing system, and 'loans in masquerade;' and as the name of Pitt had been quoted against the Government, he reminded the House that this had only reference to errors which the great Minister had himself confessed and retrieved a few years later, while the Government had followed in his footsteps in the better-advised course which he subsequently adopted.

The division list gave—For the resolution, 290; for the amendment, 186—majority for the Government, 104. With this division the Opposition to Mr. Gladstone's financial proposals collapsed. On the 24th of July, however, when a vote of credit of £3,000,000 was moved by Lord John Russell for the expenses of the war, Mr. Disraeli again severely attacked the Government on the general question of their policy,

and asserted that there would have been no war if Lord Derby and himself had not been compelled to resign the conduct of affairs. He once more complained that the war was largely due to the evil of a coalition Government.

The vote of credit really became one of a vote of confidence in the Ministry, as the Prince Consort expressed it in a letter to Baron Stockmar. When the report on the vote of credit was brought up, Lord D. Stuart moved an amendment to the effect that her Majesty should be requested not to prorogue Parliament until it should have further information upon the subject. A great debate was expected, but all parties shrank from imperilling the existence of the Ministry; and in the event the report was received, the amendment being negatived without a division.

Parliament was prorogued on the 12th of August, her Majesty stating in the Speech from the Throne that, in cordial co-operation with the Emperor of the French, her efforts would be directed during the recess 'to the effectual repression of that ambitious and aggressive spirit on the part of Russia which has compelled us to take up arms in defence of an ally, and to secure the future tranquillity of Europe.'

## CHAPTER X.

## THE CRIMEAN WAR (continued).

The Emperor Nicholas and the Peace Party—Dissolution of the European Concert—Position of the European Powers on the Eastern Question—The Policy of Prussia condemned—The Queen and the War—Dissensions in the Cabinet—Management of the War—Debates in both Houses—The Disasters in the Crimea—Attacks upon the Ministry—Mr. Roebuck's Motion for a Committee to inquire into the Condition of the English Army before Sebastopol—Lord John Russell resigns—Condition of Things in the Crimea—Mr. Gladstone's Defence of the Government—Necessity for a Committee—Great Majority against Ministers—Collapse of the Coalition Cabinet of Lord Aberdeen—Position of the Peelite Section—Ministerial Negotiations—Formation of a Government under Lord Palmerston—Its Difficulties—Mr. Roebuck's Motion—Resignation of Mr. Gladstone, Sir J. Graham, and Mr. Sidney Herbert—Their Defence—The Cabinet reconstructed—Death of the Czar.

At one point in the history of the negotiations which preceded the great events of the Crimean war, there was some hope that the concert between the four Great Powers—England, France, Austria, and Prussia—would have succeeded in preserving peace. It is true that the Emperor Nicholas encouraged himself in his stubborn course by the utterances of Mr. Cobden, Mr. Bright, and other distinguished friends of peace in this country, to whose speeches he attached a high degree of importance. Mr. Cobden described Turkey as a decaying country, and said that the Turks could not be permanently maintained as a ruling Power in Europe; Mr. Bright took up the strain, affirming that Russia was an advancing nation, and that

Russia and Turkey would have been settled long ago, settled by the concessions of Turkey. Such were the expressed opinions of these popular leaders, and, believing them to be endorsed by a large body of their countrymen, the Czar rigorously pursued his warlike policy, and began to doubt whether after all England was serious in her resolve to go to war, and to prosecute the threatened struggle to the end.\*

But though these things had their weight, the dissolution of the European concert was another powerful influence in destroying the prospect of peace. Prussia and Austria, having acknowledged upon paper the justness of the views of England and France, practically refused to support them when the time for doing so arrived. It is important briefly to state the position of the various European Powers upon the Eastern Question, when the crisis came in March, 1854. This we can best do in the words of Mr. Gladstone himself:†—

'Austria urged the two leading states, England and France, to send in their ultimatum to Russia, and promised it her decided support. She redeemed the pledge, but only to the extent of a strong verbal advocacy. Without following out the subsequent detail of her proceedings, she rendered thereafter to the Allies but equivocal and uncertain service; without,

<sup>\*</sup> It will be understood that the author is not at this moment either impugning or endorsing the views of Mr. Bright and his friends upon the Crimean war; he is simply stating their effect. The supporters of a peace policy mistook the spirit and temper of the country in this great question, but it is only bare justice to admit that they were consistent throughout.

<sup>†</sup> See Article on the 'Life of the Prince Consort,' in the Church of England Quarterly Review for January, 1878.

however, disavowing their policy either in act or word. It was Prussia which, at the critical moment, to speak in homely language, bolted; the very policy which she had recommended, she declined unconditionally to sustain, from the first moment when it began to assume the character of a solid and stern reality. In fact, she broke up the European concert, by which it was that France and England had hoped, and had had a right to hope, to put down the stubbornness of the Czar, and to repel his attack upon the public law of Europe. The question that these Allies had now to determine was whether, armed as they had been all along with the panoply of moral authority, they would, upon this unfortunate and discreditable desertion, allow all their demands, their reasonings, their professions to melt into thin air.'

The early policy of England on the Oriental Question has never been better stated and vindicated than it is here in few words. We had no selfish ends to answer by the war, and, on the defection of Austria and Prussia, might have shrunk from encountering Russia, except with the aid of those who had promised us their support. But what would have become of the traditional glory of England in that case? She has ever been the friend of the oppressed, and there is something nobler in fulfilling one's moral obligations than in fighting for mere personal and selfish rights. We had put our hand to the work, and could not go backward. To have retreated at the supreme moment might have endangered the permanent peace and welfare of Europe; and such a step would certainly have been consenting tacitly to the establishment of a precedent valuable to aggressive and ambitious Sovereigns in the future.

The Prince Consort, in a letter to King Leopold, dated the 6th of November 1854, thus exposed the dangers attending the vacillating policy of Prussia:—

'The longer Russia's resistance lasts, and the longer the struggle is devolved on France and England alone, the more compact must their alliance become. As, then, France and Napoleon are under all circumstances sure to cherish their traditional arrière-pensées of territorial aggrandisement at their neighbours' expense, the risk, as far as these neighbours are concerned, certainly is that England may some day have to stand by and see things done which she herself cannot desire, but must uphold in the interest of her ally. This danger, I repeat, Austria, Prussia, and Germany may avert by acting with us, not in the manipulation of Protocols, which leave everything to the exertions of the Western Powers, and have no other object but to make sure that no harm is done to the enemy. Such a course is dishonourable, immoral, leads to distrust, and ultimately to direct hostility. Already the soreness of feeling here against Prussia is intense, nor can it be less in France. I have made the Prince of Prussia aware of my anxiety on this head.'\*

The course pursued by the German Powers was utterly indefensible, and on them must be placed the responsibility of having failed to use decisive pressure upon Russia in favour of peace. In all human probability, the Czar would have hesitated in his career had he been warned to desist from his aggressions by the united voice of all the leading Powers of Europe.

The war began in earnest, and on the 21st of September, 1854, the Duke of Newcastle received a telegram announcing that 25,000 English troops, 25,000 French, and 8,000 Turks had landed safely at Eupatoria, 'without meeting with any resistance, and had already begun to march upon Sebastopol.

Yet, popular as the war was in England, there were symptoms during the autumn that Lord Aberdeen's Ministry—the Government which declared it—was becoming just the reverse. If there were not

<sup>\*</sup> Life of His Royal Highness the Prince Consort. By Theodore Martin. Vol. III.

showing finnensions in the farmer there was a great lack of manimize of feeling 14 3) the commet of the was. Ministerial changes had taken have income the presenting session: Lord John Russell had accepted the office of President of the Council; and the duties A War Minister having become 510 onerous 50 be any longer annomated with those of the Secretary for the Colonies, the Duke of Newcastle was created Secretary at War. The Queen was well aware of the repugnance with which Lord Aberdeen had always viewed the war; but he was a statesman with whom she had ever been upon the most cordial relations, and for whom she entertained feelings of the highest personal esteem. Her communications and expressed wishes alike prove that she was most desirous the war should be prosecuted with vigour, now that it had been entered upon, and she looked to the Premier to second her own hopes and those of the nation. But it soon became apparent that the Cabinet was not entirely at one—a most unfortunate circumstance at this critical juncture. Mr. Martin observes upon this point:—

"If ever a Ministry strong in its own counsels and mutual trust, and strong also in Parliament, was necessary, it was so at the present time. But nonoriously discontents reigned within the Cabinet itself. Two at least of its members, Lord Russell and Lord Palmerston, would have preferred to lead rather than to be led. Each had his partisans within and without the Cabinet, and it was apparent to all the world that no cordial unanimity existed between the Peelite section of the Ministry and their colleagues. In the House of Commons the followers of the Government showed no symptoms of coherence. The head of the Ministry was a favourite object of attack with them, no less than with the Opposition. Nor was this met by that display of loyalty on the part of his supporters which the head of a Government has a right to expect. It was impossible

for a Ministry thus obviously not at one with itself to command either the respect or the obedience of the House; having themselves encouraged insubordination against their chief, some of the members were not entitled to complain if they found themselves thwarted in their measures through a similar disregard of party ties by the body of the Liberal party.'\*

The Queen was most anxious for the country to witness a united Government, and the time must have been a peculiarly trying one for Lord Aberdeen. Mr. Gladstone affirms that the statement of Mr. Martin to the effect that there was no cordial unanimity between the Peelite section of the Ministry and their colleagues is an entire mistake. We are thus met by the dilemma of Mr. Gladstone's statement on the one hand, and Mr. Martin's equally emphatic statement on the other—the latter being founded on documents furnished to the writer, and views expressed to him, as well as being confessedly sanctioned by the highest personage in the realm. It is possible to harmonise the two by reading Mr. Martin's statement in the light of a confession which Mr. Gladstone himself makes, to the effect that 'rifts there were without doubt in the imposing structure (of the Cabinet), but they were due entirely to individual views or pretensions, and in no way to sectional antagonism.' This is quite sufficient to account for the rumours which arose—rumours that discredited the Ministry with a portion of the House and with the country. Whether the differences were merely 'rifts' or sectional disagreements matters little. Mr. Martin may have expressed himself too strongly, but that

<sup>\*</sup> Mr. Martin's Life of the Prince Consort, Vol. III., p. 90.

there were differences between individual members of the Cabinet, which the Court lamented equally with the nation at large, admits of no doubt. We may cheerfully admit Mr. Gladstone's contention that there was no sectional demarcation, nor any approach to it, within the Cabinet; also that 'not even when the Eastern Question became the engrossing subject of the day was a sectional division to be traced. It may be true, if nuances are to be minutely investigated, that the Peelite colour was on the whole a shade or two more pacific than the Whig; but even this is true of the leading individuals rather than of the sections, and it may be safely affirmed that, of all the steps taken by that Government during the long and complicated negotiations before the Crimean war, there was not one which was forced, as will sometimes happen, by a majority of the Cabinet upon the minority.' Yet, accepting all this, there could not have existed amongst the members of the Aberdeen Ministry that spirit of full and frank cordiality which should distinguish a government in the time of a grave crisis. Or, if there were this feeling, how came it that the knowledge of a variation of sentiment not only permeated the ranks of both political parties in the Houses of Parliament, and was widely disseminated through the country, but caused uneasiness likewise in Royal circles?

But such differences as did exist in the Ministry became a wholly secondary matter when the management of the war came to be discussed. Parliament reassembled on the 12th of December under circumstances more stirring and momentous than any which had occurred since the year of Waterloo. Debates immediately took place in both Houses on the conduct of the Ministry. The battles of the Alma, Balaclava, and Inkermann had been fought, and the British troops, as in times past, had covered themselves with glory. But this had been achieved by immense sacrifices, and the reports which reached England from the Crimea affecting the conduct of the war were such as to cause a painful feeling throughout the country, from the Queen down to her meanest subject. The British army was suffering greatly, and to meet the exigencies of the sick and wounded the fund known as the Patriotic Fund was set on foot. The country subscribed with a noble liberality, and in fourteen days the sum of £15,000 was received at the Times' office alone. In less than three months the whole fund exceeded half a million, and by the time of its closing it had reached upwards of a million and a quarter. Nor was this all: Miss Florence Nightingale, and thirty-seven lady nurses, proceeded to the Crimea to nurse the brave men who had been wounded. reached Scutari on the 5th of November, in time to receive the soldiers who had been wounded at the battle of Balaclava. On the arrival of Miss Nightingale, the great hospital at Scutari—in which up to this time all had been chaos and discomfort—was reduced to order; and those tender lenitives, which only woman's thought and woman's sympathy can bring to

the sick man's couch, were applied to solace and alleviate the agonies of pain, or the torture of fever and prostration.' A supplementary staff of fifty trained nurses afterwards followed Miss Nightingale and her assistants to the seat of war. The ministrations of these noble women form the brightest episode in this long and terrible war; and many pathetic stories are told in connection with the consolations they administered to the suffering and the dying. To many a brave soldier, apparently a prey to the agents of death, Miss Nightingale became a veritable angel of life.

Alike in palace and in cottage, the sufferings of the troops had created a feeling of profound sympathy; but these sufferings were aggravated by the rigours of an unusually severe winter. The Queen herself wrote to Lord Raglan: 'The sad privations of the army, the bad weather, and the constant sickness are causes of the deepest concern to the Queen and Prince. The braver her noble troops are, the more patiently and heroically they bear all their trials and sufferings, the more miserable we feel at their long continuance. The Queen trusts that Lord Raglan will be very strict in seeing that no unnecessary privations are incurred by any negligence of those whose duty it is to watch over their wants. . . . The Queen earnestly trusts that the large amount of warm clothing sent out has not only reached Balaclava, but has been distributed, and that Lord Raglan has been successful in procuring the means of hutting for the men. Lord Raglan cannot think how much we suffer for the army, and how painfully anxious we are to know that their privations are decreasing.' The Prince Consort, writing to King Leopold a few weeks later, said: 'The present administration of the army is not to be defended. My heart bleeds to think of it!' The solicitude thus felt in the most illustrious quarters was shared by the country, and it found expression on the re-assembling of Parliament. This was natural and imperative, even if no iota of blame in connection with the army arrangements in the Crimea could be directly attributed to the Ministry.

Acrimonious debates ensued in the two Houses. In the Upper House the Earl of Derby severely condemned the inefficient manner in which the war had been carried on. 'Too late,' he said, were the fatal words applicable to the whole conduct of Government in the course of the war, while the number of troops sent out had been quite insufficient to overthrow the power of Russia. The Duke of Newcastle, in reply, while not defending all the steps which had marked the conduct of the war from its commencement, said the Ministry were prepared to prosecute it with resolve and unflinch-They would not reject overtures of ing firmness. peace, but they would not consent to any but an honourable peace. The Government had confidence in the army, in the people, and in their Allies, and cherished the highest hope of bringing the contest to a satisfactory issue. In the House of Commons, Mr. Disraeli attacked the policy of Ministers from first to Everything was a blunder or a mishap of some description or other. The Government had invaded

Russia with 25,000 men, and made no provision for their support. With regard to the Treaty with Austria, he threw grave doubts upon the sincerity of our new Mr. Disraeli continued: 'I believe that this Cabinet of coalition flattered themselves, and were credulous in their flattery, that the tremendous issues which they have had to encounter, and which must make their days and nights anxious, which have been part of their lives, would not have occurred. They could never dream; for instance, that it would be the termination of the career of a noble lord to carry on war with Russia, of which that noble lord had been the cherished and spoiled child. . . . It has been clearly shown that two of you are never of the same opinion. You were candid enough to declare this, and it is probable that no three of you ever supposed the result would be what it has been found to be.'

The only thing which sustained the country under such a deplorable state of affairs, said the leader of the Opposition, was the unparalleled heroism of our troops. Mr. Disraeli concluded with these words:—'No Austrian alliance; no Four Points; no secret articles—but let France and England together solve this great question, and establish and secure the tranquillisation of Europe.' Lord John Russell retorted in a speech of considerable dignity and power. There was not one gleam of patriotism, he said, in anything which had fallen from the right hon. gentleman. His object was to destroy confidence in Ministers, and to weaken the Anglo-French alliance. He justified at length the course

of the Government, and defended the arrangement which had been entered into with Austria. On the report of the Address being brought up, Mr. Gladstone furnished details respecting the British forces in the East, and took occasion to answer certain criticisms which had been passed upon the Government. He did not lay claim to impeccability on their behalf, but they were guiltless of the errors which had been ascribed to them. They had never supposed that an impression could be made upon Russia with an army of 50,000 men—that figure only represented the number which could be carried on at once from Varna to the Crimea. France had already despatched to the seat of war between 90,000 and 95,000 men.

On the 15th of December the thanks of both Houses were formally voted to the officers and men of . the army in the East, and to the French generals, their allies.

The Bill for the Enlistment of Foreigners was subsequently introduced, and was fiercely attacked by the opponents of the Government in both Houses. In answer to Lord Ellenborough's strictures in the Lords, the Earl of Aberdeen denied that the foreign recruits were to be used as substitutes for militiamen, or to be employed in this country. At a later stage, the Duke of Newcastle agreed to reduce the numbers to be enlisted from 15,000 to 10,000. In the House of Commons the bill was assailed by the Opposition, who were reinforced by some of the usual supporters of the Ministry. Mr. Disraeli, at the second stage of the bill,

announced that he should oppose it at every stage. He inveighed strongly against the conduct of the war, and the employment of mercenary troops, and at the same time asserted that there had been no parallel to the siege of Sebastopol since the invasion of Sicily by the Athenians. If not in absolute peril, we were in a condition to cause grave anxiety. Lord John Russell rebuked his right hon. opponent for gloating over and anticipating disaster to the British arms. Ministers could not conduct the war if the present bill were rejected. Lord Palmerston urged that enlistment in England was a slow process, while the enemy with whom we were engaged could command an almost unlimited supply of men. In the debate on the third reading Mr. Bright maintained that in supporting Turkey we were 'fighting for a hopeless cause and a worthless ally.' Ministers, however, were victorious, the bill passing by a majority of 38; and on the 23rd of December—after having accomplished an almost incredible amount of work in a few days—Parliament adjourned for a month.

On its reassembling, it speedily became obvious that the House was determined, if possible, to sift the charges made in connection with the conduct of the war. The whole country seemed to expect a formal attack upon the Ministry. Lord Aberdeen was in a most unenviable position, and the Queen expressed her sympathy with him in his difficulties, which he had endeavoured to meet with admirable temper, for-bearance, and firmness. Lord Ellenborough and Lord

Lyndhurst gave notice of motions hostile to the Government in the Upper House, and in the Lower Mr. Roebuck announced that he should move for the appointment of a select committee 'to inquire into the condition of our army before Sebastopol, and into the conduct of those departments of the Government whose duty it has been to minister to the wants of that army.' Instead of the Ministry being able to show a bold front before these attacks, Lord John Russell took time by the forelock, and caused universal astonishment by tendering to her Majesty his resignation of the office of President of the Council. This was a most extraordinary step, and Lord Aberdeen could only interpret its object to be the overthrow of the Ministry. The Duke of Newcastle, whose retirement from the office of Secretary at War Lord John Russell had long desired, offered to make himself the scapegoat of the Ministry. Lord Palmerston was anxious that the Government should not be broken up, believing that such an event would prove a calamity to the country; but he doubted his superior fitness for the post of War Minister over the Duke of Newcastle. After much negotiation, the Cabinet resolved to hold together, save for the secession of Lord John Russell, who had resigned, he said, because he did not see how Mr. Roebuck's motion was to be resisted. His lordship's decision should have been come to earlier, if at all. The defects of management, the blunders of detail, by which one of the noblest armies that ever left British shores had been reduced to a pitiable

condition, were no new facts, or at least asserted facts by those who professed to have authentic information on the subject; and Lord John Russell would have done well to brave the storm with his colleagues. His desertion was looked upon universally as an act of cowardice. In explaining the reasons for his resignation, his lordship paid a high compliment to many of his colleagues, especially singling out Mr. Gladstone.

The debate upon Mr. Roebuck's motion came on in due course. It was opposed by Mr. Sidney Herbert, who asserted that the condition of things in the Crimea had been grossly exaggerated, and that great improvements had already taken place. The motion, if carried, would paralyse all action, both at home and abroad. A speech was delivered by Mr. Stafford, however, which caused great sensation. The hon. member said he would only describe what he had seen. He condemned the sites of the hospitals at Scutari and Abydos as radically unhealthy, and there were other defects in connection with the former. But matters were much worse at the Balaclava hospital, where the bed-clothes had never been washed, where men sick of one disease had caught another by being put into the place where a man had died just before of fever. In one room he found fourteen, in another nine, men lying upon the floor; while in the passage between them were excellent bedsteads, which might have been put up on an average of three minutes each. He also detailed specific cases of neglect, and consequent misery endured by the soldiers. He had seen

hospitals containing three hundred sick, yet without wine; he had seen soldiers in vain asking for their knapsacks, which were stowed away under the cargoes of ships; and he had seen wounded men lying on the bare boards. The general effect of what he had witnessed had been summed up by a French officer, who observed to the hon. member, 'You seem, sir, to carry on war according to the system of the Middle Ages; and our regret for your backwardness is increased because we see the noble lives you are losing.' Mr. Stafford excepted from censure Miss Nightingale and her nurses, and concluded by referring to the attachment of the soldiers to their officers, and especially to the Duke of Cambridge, and also to the effect produced upon the army by the Queen's letter.

The situation of the Government was known to be critical, and a majority for Mr. Roebuck's motion was evidently expected by both sides of the House. Under these depressing and adverse circumstances, Mr. Gladstone rose to reply to the severe strictures which had been passed upon the Ministry. Thanking, in the outset, Lord John Russell for the eulogium pronounced upon him by the noble lord a few days before, he said he was at the same time bound to state that his lordship had not urged his remonstrances between the month of November and the time of his resignation. In November there were no complaints against the War Office, and, only in the month preceding that, Lord John Russell had written to the Duke of Newcastle expressing his belief that he had done all in his office that

a man could do. But there was more than this; for the Earl of Aberdeen, being doubtful of the intentions of the President of the Council, asked him, on the 16th of December, whether he still adhered to his intention of pressing changes in the War Department; and the noble lord stated, in reply, that, on the advice of a friend of his own, he had abandoned the views he pressed in November. So that up to the previous Tuesday night, when the noble lord sent in his resignation, his colleagues did not know that he was dissatisfied, or that he meant to press his former views as to the reorganisation of the War Department; and it might be thought that, after losing the services of the noble lord, the Government ought not to have met the House, or at least not to have met them without some reorganisation. Then followed this striking passage in the Chancellor of the Exchequer's address:—'He felt it was not for them either to attempt to make terms with the House by a reorganisation, or to shrink from a judgment of the House upon their past acts. If they had shrunk, what sort of epitaph would have been written over their remains? He himself would have written it thus: Here lie the dishonoured ashes of a Ministry which found England at peace and left it in war, which was content to enjoy the emoluments of office, and to wield the sceptre of power so long as no man had the courage to question their existence. They saw the storm gathering over the country; they heard the agonising accounts which were almost daily received of the state of the sick and wounded in the

East. These things did not move them. But so soon as the hon. member for Sheffield raised his hand to point the thunderbolt, they became conscience-stricken with a sense of guilt, and, hoping to escape punishment, they ran away from duty.'

This eloquent language—conveying as it did, by implication, a withering rebuke to Lord John Russell —was received with tumultuous cheers by one portion of the House. It at any rate demonstrated that the Government were not in the least actuated by the spirit of their late colleague. Mr. Gladstone next addressed himself to the motion before the House, observing that he himself would be the first to vote for it if it could be proved that it would benefit the army. He believed that it would aggravate, rather than alleviate, the evils complained of. There was also the less necessity for it, as by the latest accounts matters were improving. The whole army was improving-warm clothing had been served out everywhere, the huts were in course of being set up, the railway would be finished within three weeks of its commencement, and, what was of greater consequence, an arrangement had been effected between the generals by which 1,600 Frenchmen would be permanently in the trenches, relieving to that extent the same number of Englishmen. There had been other exaggerations as to the state of the army, which the Chancellor of the Exchequer now proceeded to clear up. According to the latest returns, he said, there were at that moment 28,000 English troops under arms before

Sebastopol, and to these were to be added from 3,000 to 4,000 seamen and marines; thus bringing up the whole English force now in existence to more than 30,000 men. It could not be said, therefore, that the British army before Sebastopol was extinguished. Comparisons unfavourable to the English army having been made between our own military system and that of the French, Mr. Gladstone maintained that, as regarded the points to which he had referred, comparisons were rather favourable to us, though this was a question which could scarcely be made matter for public discussion. Next, replying to Sir E. Bulwer Lytton, who had condemned the Government for not destroying Odessa, Mr. Gladstone pointed out that Odessa was an open town, with 100,000 inhabitants, and with an army of 300,000 men within easy reach. How could this have proved comfortable winter quarters for the British army? Allowing that the administration of the War Departments at home was defective, he declined to admit that it had not improved, or that it was so defective as to deserve censure. After indicating many improvements which had been effected, he came to the gist of the motion before the House, and warmly defended the Duke of Newcastle from the censure sought to be cast upon him.

There was much in this spirited defence of the Government calculated to mitigate the censures cast upon its policy. Undoubtedly many improvements had been effected in the condition of the army, and were even then being effected; but the country

desired to get at the bottom of the mismanagement which had already resulted so disastrously for our troops, and also to have some guarantee against similar blundering in future. This could only be done by the adoption of some such motion as that of Mr. Roebuck, which was confessedly not the best means that could be devised for accomplishing its object, but perhaps the only one practicable. Mr. Disraeli, observing that the Government themselves had admitted they required reconstruction, said they were now called upon to vote confidence in an Administration of whose members even they were ignorant. He denied that the motion was levelled exclusively against the Duke of Newcastle, and he ought not to be made the scapegoat for a policy for which the whole Cabinet were responsible. Nor was the blame to be thrown upon our military system, which in the hands of able men had accomplished great ends. He then used the severest language which had hitherto been employed in describing the conduct of Lord John Russell. That noble lord's explanatory speech reminded him, he said, of a page from the Life of Bubb Doddington, in the unconscious admission it contained of what, in the eighteenth century, would have been described as 'profligate intrigue.' He maintained that these Cabinet dissensions would prove most injurious to the character of England. 'Two years ago England was the leading Power in Europe; would any man say that she now occupied that Mr. Disraeli added that he was compelled to give his vote against a 'deplorable Administration.'

Lord John Russell had few friends at this juncture, for although there were some who approved his secession from the Government, there were apparently none who could commend the manner of it. The noble lord defended himself in his place, and said that if the whole of what had passed between himself and Lord Aberdeen and the Duke of Newcastle could be laid before the House, the transactions would assume a different complexion. He strongly denied Mr. Disraeli's imputation that he had been guilty of intrigue; for in his anxiety to keep clear of anything like intrigue, he had, unadvisedly for himself, perhaps, not communicated his intention of resigning to any one of his colleagues. Lord Palmerston, following Lord John Russell, condemned the motion as setting a dangerous precedent, and he hoped the House would not discredit Parliamentary Government in the face of Europe by continuing these discussions, and showing that a constitutional government was not so well able to carry on war as governments framed on other principles.

The noble lord made an energetic and telling defence, but it came too late. The Government appealed to a wall of adamant.

The result of the division was one of the greatest surprises ever experienced in Parliamentary history. The numbers were—For Mr. Roebuck's committee, 305; against, 148—majority against Ministers, 157. The scene was a peculiar and, probably, an unparalleled one. The cheers which are usually heard from one side or other of the House on the numbers of a

division being announced, were not forthcoming. The members were for the moment spellbound with astonishment; then there came a murmur of amazement, and finally a burst of general laughter.

Thus collapsed the famous Coalition Cabinet of Lord Aberdeen—a Cabinet distinguished for its oratorical strength, and for the conspicuous abilities of its chief members. Upon Lord John Russell's secession, its last hope of being able to survive had passed away. The member for Sheffield had, indeed, pointed the thunderbolt, but it would not have fallen with such crushing force had not the resignation of the President of the Council carried confusion into the ranks of the Ministry. The time had undoubtedly come for the Cabinet of Lord Aberdeen to fall to pieces; but it would not have perished beneath such a tremendous majority had it been able to make a strong and united stand against the attacks of its foes. Premier himself a cessation from the cares of State must have been a welcome relief; and it was no secret that he would willingly have retired from office long before. He had only consented to remain at his post because there was no other member of his Ministry who could hold the Cabinet together.

The members of the Aberdeen Government fell into deep obloquy during this early period of the Crimean war; yet a high tribute has been paid by Mr. Martin to the Peelite section of the Cabinet. His views acquire the greater importance, seeing that they were also those of the Queen and the Prince Consort,

who not only took the keenest interest in the national affairs at this crisis, but had every opportunity of judging of the sincerity and patriotism of their advisers. This tribute, while paid chiefly to the Premier and the War Secretaries, embraced also the most distinguished Peelite in the Cabinet, Mr. Gladstone, who, up to this period, could certainly not be suspected of lukewarmness in the prosecution of the war.

The resignation of the Aberdeen Ministry was announced in both Houses on the 1st of February, the Duke of Newcastle stating in the Lords, that it was his intention to have given up the office of Secretary at War, whether the motion of Mr. Roebuck had been successful or not. He had, in fact, over and over again offered to surrender his position to any of his colleagues. The Earl of Derby was summoned by her Majesty, to whom he explained the difficulties in the way of forming a Ministry. The country demanded Lord Palmerston as War Minister, and he was essential at the present moment to any Cabinet, though not (the noble earl believed) fit to be entrusted with the Seals of War. But even with Lord Palmerston's assistance, Lord Derby assured her Majesty that he could not form a Government without the cooperation of the Peelites. This he endeavoured to secure, but as Lord Palmerston, Mr. Gladstone, and Mr. Sidney Herbert intimated that they could only extend to him an independent support, Lord Derby again waited upon the Queen, and informed her that he could not undertake the task entrusted to him.

Mr. Martin states that his lordship told her Majesty that 'an independent support' reminded him of the definition of the independent M.P., viz., one who could not be depended upon. Lord Lansdowne was next applied to for advice, and he recommended that an opportunity should be afforded Lord John Russell for the formation of a Ministry. The Queen herself wrote to the noble lord, addressing him as a person 'who may be considered to have contributed to the vote of the House of Commons which displaced her last Government,' and hoping 'that he will be able to present to her such a Government as will give a fair promise successfully to overcome the great difficulties in which the country is placed.' Her Majesty added that it would give her particular satisfaction if Lord Palmerston would join in this formation. Lord Palmerston readily agreed to serve under Lord John Russell, but Lord Clarendon absolutely declined to do 'What would be thought of him,' he asked, 'were he to accept as his leader the man who, while in the late Ministry, had steadily worked for the overthrow of Lord Aberdeen and his Peelite colleagues, and for the reinstatement in office of an exclusively Whig Ministry?' He considered it to be idle for Lord John Russell to attempt the task; no one in the country believed he could do it, and if a Ministry should be formed under his auspices, it would be 'still-born.' Lord John Russell being, as well-nigh everybody expected him to be, unsuccessful, a new Ministry was eventually formed by Lord Palmerston, though the changes from

the Aberdeen Cabinet were so few that it might rather be called a reconstruction than a creation. Gladstone and his friends at first declined to serve in this new Ministry, on the ground of their personal attachment to Lord Aberdeen and the Duke of Newcastle, whom they regarded as the real victims of the adverse vote in the House of Commons. These noblemen, however, expressly desired Mr. Gladstone not to allow his chivalrous feelings to stand in the way, and Lord Palmerston's Government was accordingly constituted as follows:—First Lord of the Treasury, Viscount Palmerston; Lord Chancellor, Lord Cranworth; President of the Council, Earl Granville; Privy Seal, Duke of Argyll; Foreign Secretary, Earl of Clarendon; Colonial Secretary, the Right Hon. Sidney Herbert; Home Secretary, Sir George Grey; Secretary at War, Lord Panmure; Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone; First Lord of the Admiralty, Sir James Graham; Public Works, Sir William Molesworth; in the Cabinet, but without office, the Marquis of Lansdowne; President of the Board of Control, Sir Charles Wood. Ministry was generally considered to afford promise of stability. It was also calculated to inspire confidence in the country. Lord Palmerston had for some time been regarded as the coming man, and his name carried great weight across the Channel.

It soon became evident, however, that though an apparently durable Administration had been formed, it was surrounded with grave difficulties. Whatever

might have been the case as touching the country, by many prominent members of the House of Commons the new Government was regarded with feelings of distrust almost as keen as those which had led to the overthrow of Lord Aberdeen. Yet the new War Minister, Lord Panmure, entered upon his onerous duties with energy and determination. On the 16th of February, he stated that he proposed to remedy the evils complained of at Sebastopol by a bill for the enlistment of experienced men for shorter periods of two or three years. A great proportion of the forces sent to the Crimea were young and unseasoned recruits, who rapidly sickened and died off. His lordship also detailed other measures which had been taken to remedy existing defects. In the House of Commons, on the 19th of February, Mr. Layard rose to call attention to the existing state of affairs. 'The country,' he asserted, 'stood on the brink of ruin—it had fallen into the abyss of disgrace, and become the laughing-stock of Europe.' He complained that the new Ministry differed little from the last, and demanded answers from the Premier to these questions— Whether he was willing to accept peace on any terms? -Whether the country was going to engage in prolonged hostilities?—Whether it was proposed to engage on our behalf oppressed nationalities?—Whether the Circassians would be assisted or not?—and, in short, What was the foreign policy of the Government going to be? The people of England demanded a thorough reform. Mr. Layard then compared the

conduct of the British Parliament with that of the French Convention, who, on the failure of their army, sent out their own members, securing an immediate and brilliant result. Lord Palmerston retorted that it would be an excellent thing if Mr. Layard and his proposed committee could be sent out to the Crimea, and compelled to remain there till the close of the session. He lamented the sufferings of the army, and the mistakes which had been made; but as the present Government had come forward in an emergency, and from a sense of public duty, he believed that it would obtain the confidence of the country.

A few days later the curtain rose upon another strange scene in the Parliamentary drama. buck having given notice of the appointment of his committee forthwith, and the country supporting him in this, a serious split occurred in the Cabinet. Hostility to the Ministry was disclaimed, but Mr. Gladstone, Sir James Graham, and Mr. Sidney Herbert took the same view of the question they had previously held. They were opposed to the investigation as a dangerous breach of a great constitutional principle, and if the committee were granted it would be a precedent from whose repetition the Executive could never again escape, however unreasonable might be the nature of the demands. They therefore retired from office. In defending himself for this step, Sir James Graham said that he could not consent to the appointment of a committee which included no member of the Government, and he was also opposed to a select committee. If secret, its investigations could not be checked by public opinion; and if open, the evidence taken would be immediately made public and canvassed in a manner injurious to the public service. Mr. Herbert held that as a vote of censure the motion for the committee was valueless, while as an inquiry it would be a mere sham. Mr. Gladstone took up somewhat different grounds. He said that the committee, being neither for punishment nor remedy, must be for government, and could not fail to deprive the Executive of its most important functions. Holding the views they did, Mr. Gladstone and his friends could scarcely have felt at ease in a Cabinet in which the purely Whig element was strongly predominant. If their retirement had not come upon this question of resisting Mr. Roebuck's committee, it must have come sooner or later as the result of a wide divergence between the Peelite and the Whig sections of the Cabinet. Yet one point, notwithstanding, deserves some consideration, viz., whether it was not unwise on the part of Mr. Gladstone to have resisted this committee, seeing that the country was determined and almost unanimous upon the subject. Lord Palmerston and the Whigs probably relished the idea of the committee as little as the Peelites, but they perceived that it would be impossible for any Government to stand at that time without yielding to the universal demand for an investigation. Of course, Mr. Gladstone took high constitutional grounds, as he had a perfect right to do, but the emergency was an exceptional one, and the appointment of the committee was the only way of allaying the popular excitement.

Lord Palmerston was at once able to fill up the vacancies in the Cabinet. Sir Charles Wood succeeded Sir J. Graham at the Admiralty; Sir G. C. Lewis succeeded Mr. Gladstone as Chancellor of the Exchequer; and Lord John Russell—already English Plenipotentiary at Vienna—was appointed Secretary of State for the Colonies. An attempt to make Mr. Roebuck's committee a secret one failed, and the Government promised to afford every facility during its investigations. But before the committee began its sittings, an event occurred which, for the moment, in many minds at least, gave strong hopes of the restoration of peace. On the 2nd of March, the Emperor Nicholas died suddenly from pulmonic apoplexy. England, as well as the whole European Continent, heard the news with mingled feelings—surprise at the unexpected nature of the event; speculation upon the consequences which were likely to follow therefrom. The question now arose, Would your Sebastopol Committee be relegated to the limbo of all abortive schemes, and the pæans of peace be heard ringing throughout Europe; or would the successor of the Emperor Nicholas prosecute to the bitter end the struggle upon which his sire had entered?

## CHAPTER XI.

## THE CRIMEAN WAR (concluded).

The Vienna Conference—The Four Points—Failure of the Negotiations—Mr. Gladstone's Defence of the Expedition to the Crimea—Excitement caused by his Attitude—Lord John Russell and the Government—Mr. Disraeli's Attack on Lord Palmerston—Mr. Roebuck's Vote of Censure defeated—Continued War Debates—Progress of Events in the Crimea—Report of the Sebastopol Committee—Mr. Gladstone's Defence of his Conduct during the War—Difficulties of the Peelites—The Eastern Dramas of 1853-6 and 1875-8—Position of the Eastern Question in the two Periods—Difficulties of Foreign Policy—Reasons for Arrest of Judgment.

As Grand Duke Alexander, the new Autocrat of all the Russias had been distinguished for his enlightened and even somewhat liberal views; but he was now called to a position in which private sentiments counted for very little. Succeeding to an inheritance of war, it speedily became evident that he had resolved to pursue that war to its conclusion, rather than yield the positions taken up by the late Czar. He issued a warlike proclamation, and though he agreed to take part in the deliberations of the Vienna Conference, there was no sign made that he intended to abate one jot or tittle of the Russian claims. Meanwhile, before the Vienna Conference came to an end, the Anglo-French alliance was strengthened by the accession of Sardinia. treaty was drawn up by which the King of Sardinia engaged to furnish and maintain a body of 15,000 men for the requirements of the war, and he was to receive in return a loan of £1,000,000 from the British Government.

Lord John Russell left England at the close of February as Plenipotentiary to Vienna. The two great objects which British statesmen had in view were the limitation of the preponderance of Russia in the Black Sea, and the acknowledgment of Turkey as one of the great European Powers. If these points could be gained, it was hoped they would result in putting an end to the war. The Conference began on the 15th of March at Vienna, but little progress was made, it being obvious at an early stage that Russia did not intend to yield. The Russian Plenipotentiary told Lord John Russell that Russia 'would not consent to limit the number of her ships—if she did so she forfeited her honour—she would be no more Russia. They did not want Turkey, they would be glad to maintain the Sultan; but they knew it was impossible: he must perish; they were resolved not to let any other Power have Constantinople—they must not have that door to their dominions in the Black Sea shut against them.' In order that the reader may clearly understand the preliminary basis upon which the negotiations at Vienna were founded, we append the 'Four Points' which were the subject of so much discussion:—

<sup>&#</sup>x27;1. Russian Protectorate over the Principalities of Wallachia, Moldavia, and Servia to cease; the privileges granted by the Sultan to these provinces to be placed under a collective guarantee of the Powers. 2. Navigation of the Danube at its mouth to be freed from all obstacles, and

submitted to the application of the principles established by the Congress of Vienna. 3. The Treaty of the 13th of July, 1841, to be revised in concert by all the high contracting parties in the interest of the balance of power in Europe, and so as to put an end to the preponderance of Russia in the Black Sea. 4. Russia to give up her claim to an official protectorate over the subjects of the Sublime Porte, to whatever rite they may belong; and France, Austria, Great Britain, Prussia, and Russia to assist mutually in obtaining from the Ottoman Government the confirmation and the observance of the religious privileges of the different Christian communities, and to turn to account, in the common interests of their co-religionists, the generous intentions manifested by the Sultan, at the same time avoiding any aggression on his dignity and the independence of his crown.'

After these propositions had been discussed for two. days by the representatives of the Powers at Vienna, an arrangement was come to on the first point, by which Russia agreed to abandon all exclusive protection over the Danubian Principalities of Wallachia, Moldavia, and Servia; and an amicable settlement was also arrived at with regard to the free navigation of the Danube. But the third point was the crucial one. It not only provided for the revision of the Treaty of 1841, but sought to curtail the power of Russia in the Black Sea. After much deliberation, and many adjournments, Prince Gortschakoff, on behalf of Russia, declared that he could not agree to the limitation of her navy in any way, whether by treaty or otherwise. The Turkish envoys proposed a kind of compromise, but on the Conference meeting again on the 21st of April, Prince Gortschakoff reiterated his former declaration. Russia could not, without loss of dignity, accept any proposal limiting the amount of her forces in the Black Sea. Counter-proposals by Russia were now submitted, which the French and English

Plenipotentiaries declared they had no authority to discuss; though the Austrian representative said that these proposals admitted of discussion, and contained elements of which Austria would endeavour to avail herself for an understanding. Finally Austria put forward propositions which Lord John Russell and M. Drouyn de Lhuys regarded as affording a prospect of an amicable settlement of the question. These propositions, however, being a virtual surrender of the chief points for which England and France had uniformly contended, M. Drouyn de Lhuys and Lord John Russell incurred great unpopularity for admitting them to be feasible. The former was compelled to resign his office of Minister of Foreign Affairs in France, and the latter was ultimately also compelled to secede from Lord Palmerston's Cabinet.

The failure of the Vienna Conference caused great excitement in England. Ministers were attacked again and again in both Houses. On the 24th of May, Mr. Disraeli brought forward the following resolution in the House of Commons:—'That this House cannot adjourn for the recess without expressing its dissatisfaction with the ambiguous language and uncertain conduct of her Majesty's Government in reference to the great question of peace or war; and that, under these circumstances, this House feels it a duty to declare that it will continue to give every support to her Majesty in the prosecution of the war, until her Majesty shall, in conjunction with her Allies, obtain for this country a safe and honourable peace.'

Mr. Disraeli supported this motion in a speech of nearly three hours' duration. He made a powerful attack on Lord John Russell, who had been distinguished (he said) for his inflammatory denunciations of Russia, and was incompetent to negotiate a peace. Yet an impossible peace had nearly been concluded without that House, and a motion was placed on the table by Mr. Milner Gibson, affirming that the propositions of Russia were reasonable, and that some blame attached to the Government for refusing them. He (Mr. Disraeli) complained that there were diplomacy and war existent at the same time, and he concluded by denouncing 'this subterfuge of negotiation and Ministerial trifling.'

Rising during the debate on this motion, Mr. Gladstone defended the expedition to the Crimea. He denied that it had been entirely unsuccessful, for while in August, 1854, Russia refused to accept the Four Points, in the month of December following the Emperor accepted those very propositions as a basis of negotiations which he had so strenuously opposed before. Looking at the question at issue as one only of terms, how did it stand? Russia had agreed to the First and Second points, and part of the Third point. The Fourth would be agreed to at any time. The only matter to be settled now was as to the limitation of the power of Russia in the Black Sea. When a member of the late Government, he was in favour of limiting the power of Russia in the Black Sea, but he now thought that such a proposition implied a great indignity upon Russia. He was of opinion that the Russian proposal to give to Turkey the power of opening and shutting the Straits was one calculated to bring about a settlement. As regarded the position of Russia now, he challenged any person to show him a case in the whole history of the world in which the political objects of war had been more completely gained without the prostration of the adverse party. He felt that he would be incurring a fearful responsibility if he did not raise his voice to beseech the House to pause before they persevered in a war so bloody and so decimating, while there was a chance of returning to the condition of a happy and an honourable peace. If we now fought merely for military success, 'let the House look at this sentiment with the eye of reason, and it would appear immoral, inhuman, and un-Christian. If the war were continued in order to obtain military glory we should tempt the justice of Him in whose hands was the fate of armies, to launch upon us His wrath.' Though the orator's eloquence was warmly admired, however, he spoke to an audience largely unsympathetic.

Lord John Russell, in replying to the arguments of Mr. Gladstone, contended that it was essential in the interests of Europe that the power of Russia should be considerably curtailed. There was no more indignity now to Russia in enforcing this than when Mr. Gladstone agreed to support the policy by measures so costly in blood and treasure. There was no security for Turkey or for Europe that Russia would not

pursue her aggrandising designs, unless some limitation of her power was obtained. He denounced the conduct and the ambition of Russia in very eloquent terms. The Government secured a majority of 100 upon Mr. Disraeli's motion.

Mr. Gladstone's attitude at this juncture was much canvassed and condemned. One member, Mr. J. G. Phillimore, said that after reading Mr. Gladstone's recent speech, 'he could comprehend how great and magnificent preparations had shrunk into a miserable defence, how disaster and defeat had sprung from the bosom of victory, and how a fatal and malignant influence had long paralysed the influence of our fleets and armies.' As further demonstrating the excitement which Mr. Gladstone's speech had caused in many quarters, we will quote a portion of a letter which Prince Albert wrote to Lord Aberdeen, in view of the discussions that were still to come on in the House of Commons upon Sir F. Baring's motion relative to the conduct of the war, and Mr. Lowe's amendment thereupon. 'Any such declaration as Mr. Gladstone has made upon Mr. Disraeli's motion,' said his Royal Highness, 'must not only weaken us abroad in public estimation, and give a wrong opinion as to the determination of the nation to support the Queen in the war in which she has been involved, but render all chance of obtaining an honourable peace without great fresh sacrifices of blood and treasure impossible, by giving new hopes and spirit to the enemy.' The Prince recognised the fact that Mr. Gladstone and his friends had been falsely accused of supineness at an earlier stage of the war, but he could not blind himself to the further very important fact that his latest speech would be laid hold upon both by the Opposition and the enemies of the war. Indeed, during the same debate, Sir E. Bulwer Lytton was vehemently cheered when he asked, 'When Mr. Gladstone was dwelling, in a Christian spirit that moved them all, on the gallant blood that had been shed by England, by her Allies, and by her foemen in that quarrel, did it never occur to him that all the while he was speaking, this one question was forcing itself upon the minds of his English audience, "And shall all this blood have been shed in vain?"'

The debate was resumed, and Sir F. Baring's motion, which was not inimical to the Government, was accepted by Lord Palmerston, Mr. Gladstone acquiescing in this course. Mr. Lowe's amendment was negatived. That the great majority of the House were still in a most warlike mood was evident from the cheers which greeted Lords Palmerston and Russell when they announced that the war must be vigorously proceeded with.

But the mistakes which had been made by our Plenipotentiary at Vienna could not be blotted out, and the Opposition left the Government no peace. Questions and hostile motions, or threats of resolutions, showered upon them. On the 10th of July, Sir E. Bulwer Lytton gave notice of this resolution:—'That the conduct of our Ministry in the recent negotiations

at Vienna has, in the opinion of this House, shaken the confidence of this country in those to whom its affairs are entrusted.' It was felt that something must be done with this motion, and Lord John Russell again prepared to run away; indeed there was nothing else left for him to do, if his colleagues were to be saved. Accordingly, on the 13th, he resigned. On the 16th, the day fixed for the debate upon Sir E. B. Lytton's motion, the resignation was announced in the Lord John Russell defended himself by saying that it was not true he had promised to support the Austrian propositions. They had been considered and rejected by the Cabinet, after due deliberation. He had felt bound to fulfil his promise to Count Buol at Vienna, but having done that, he also felt bound to submit as a plenipotentiary to the decision of the Government. He thanked the members of the Cabinet and other friends for the kindness they had shown him. There were some friends, however, who professed great attachment, 'but whenever there was a rub in his fortunes they fell away like water, and were never found again except to sink him. For these he felt nothing but contempt.'

Sir E. Bulwer Lytton, upon the announcement of Lord John Russell's resignation, withdrew his motion, but in doing so said he believed there was still a peace party in the Cabinet, which must be closely watched. Lord Palmerston said that his ex-colleague's resignation had been offered to him before, but he had declined it, and expressed a desire to stand or fall by

Mr. Disraeli humorously sketched the conduct of the Premier and Mr. Bouverie, 'the friends of the noble lord, and very devoted to him, but who had managed notwithstanding to get him out of office.' The right hon member for Buckinghamshire then went on to say that the end of it was this-'the noble lord, with a reputation of a quarter of a century —a man who for all that time had given a tone and a colour to the policy of this country—who had met the giants of other times in debate—who had measured rapiers with Canning, and divided the public admiration with Sir Robert Peel—had mysteriously disappeared, and did not dare to face this motion; while as to the noble lord now at the head of the Cabinet, he had addressed the House that night in a tone and with accents which showed that if the honour and interests of this country were much longer entrusted to him, the first would be tarnished and the last would be betrayed.'

This wholesale condemnation of Lord Palmerston was of course ill-deserved, and it seems almost difficult to believe—in these comparatively serene days—that such strongly vituperative language, with its scathing taunts and sarcasms, could have been prevalent in Parliamentary warfare less than a generation ago. It appears all the more extraordinary, seeing that Mr. Disraeli spoke these bitter words concerning Lord Palmerston upon a motion that was already moribund. With regard to Lord John Russell, there probably never was a statesman more universally condemned

than his lordship was at this juncture; and the condemnation was by no means wholly undeserved. As eminent for his past services as any of his distinguished colleagues, he appeared completely to have lost his intellectual balance over the Eastern Question, and to have abdicated his claims to diplomatic distinction and practical statesmanship acquired in the past.

Mr. Gladstone, addressing the House also upon Sir E. B. Lytton's motion, complained that Lord John Russell had in a recent speech condemned the last of the Russian proposals then before the House, though that proposal seemed to him to be substantially the very same measure which the noble lord had himself supported at Vienna. Touching the charge made against the Government by Mr. Disraeli, that the Cabinet was at one time disposed to accept the noble lord's proposals, he thought they were not amenable to it, for it appeared from the papers that, on the very day when Lord John's proposals were received in London, Lord Clarendon expressed to Count Colleredo his condemnation of the plan. So far from blaming the Government for hesitating about this offer of peace, he (Mr. Gladstone) blamed them for not giving the propositions that consideration which their gravity demanded, and for abruptly closing the hope of an honourable peace.

Mr. Roebuck next brought forward a sweeping motion, founded on the report of the Sebastopol Committee. It was in effect a vote of censure upon every member of the Aberdeen Cabinet, as being

responsible for the sufferings of the army during the winter campaign in the Crimea. The hon. member called upon the House to pass sentence. 'It is said,' urged Mr. Roebuck, 'that we have got rid of all the elements of the Administration that were mischievous. That I am very far from believing. It is also said, "Are not Aberdeen, and Newcastle, and Herbert, and Gladstone out? And what more can you expect or do you want? Do you want to see everybody punished?" I say yes, every one who has been proved guilty.' The general feeling of the House, however, was that this was an extreme proposition, and the previous question, an amendment moved by General Peel, was carried by a majority of 107 in a not very full House.

The war debates, nevertheless, continued at intervals till the close of the session. Mr. Gladstone once more strongly deprecated the continuance of the war, in a speech which he made on the 3rd of August. He defended the Austrian proposals, and threw upon Ministers the whole blame for continuing the war after their rejection. He asked what definite object there now was for prolonging the struggle. We had cast aside a basis of agreement to which all the plenipotentiaries at Vienna had agreed, and were engaged solely in making war for paltry differences. He censured Lord Clarendon for not showing in his despatches any real desire for peace, and expressed his fears of a wider breach with Austria. Touching upon the position of the

various Powers implicated in the strife, he drew a classical comparison, describing Turkey as an ally such as Anchises was to Æneas on his flight from Troy. We were gradually drifting away from friendly concert with Austria; Sardinia was dragging heavily through the conflict in mere dependence upon England; and he did not believe that France was likely to add £100,000,000 sterling to her debt for a mere difference between limitation and counterpoise. Mr. Gladstone defied the Western Powers to control the future destinies of Russia, save for a moment; and he 'placed the undivided responsibility of the continuance of the war on the head of the Ministry.' He remained content in the belief that, in endeavouring to recall the Government from the course of policy they were then pursuing, he was discharging his duty as a patriot and a loyal subject of his Queen.

Such were the chief points of a very powerful and comprehensive speech; but the debate in which it was the most noteworthy episode fell through without a division. The speech was no doubt intended for the country as well as for the House, being Mr. Gladstone's last opportunity for defending himself upon the various questions involved before the approaching lengthy recess. A passage of arms—still on the question of the war—arose between Lord John Russell and Lord Palmerston on the 7th of August, and on the 14th Parliament was prorogued. Ministers enjoyed their whitebait dinner as usual, but there were many changes at the board compared with its constituent

elements a twelvemonth before. These changes were happily hit off at the time in a parody upon four lines of one of Sir Walter Scott's poems:—

'Where's Herbert kind, and Aberdeen, Where's fluent Gladstone to be seen, Where's Graham now, that dangerous foe, And where's the Bedford Plenipo?'

The war events of the period are soon told. In May, 1855, the expedition to Kertch and the Sea of Azov destroyed many of the Russian vessels and several towns. The French, in conjunction now with Sardinia, won a splendid victory on the banks of the Tchernaya, August 16th. In June, Lord Raglan died of cholera, and was succeeded in command of the English troops by General Simpson, who, however, soon gave place to Sir William Codrington. Sebastopol still held out, and until this fortress was taken there was no hope of a termination of the war. At length the French—already in possession of the Mamelon—took the Malakoff tower by a brilliant attack, on the 8th of September. The British made a simultaneous attack, and seized upon the Redan, but they were driven from their position by the terrible fire of the Russians, who swept the fort from every side. On the 9th Prince Gortschakoff piloted the Russian garrison across the harbour to the northern part of the city, having sunk the ships before the re-This new position the Russians held but a short The Allies immediately blew up the batteries and dockyards, and the fortress which the Emperor

Nicholas had deemed impregnable was utterly destroyed. In the north, Admiral Dundas successfully bombarded Sveaborg, a strongly-fortified Russian town on the north of the Gulf of Finland. The bombardment lasted three days, August 9–11. General Williams, who held Kars, made a most heroic defence of the place, but for want of reinforcements was at length obliged to succumb. The power of Russia having been broken, alike on the Baltic and the Black Sea, the Emperor gave up the struggle, and negotiations for peace were entered upon. A treaty was subsequently concluded at Paris in March, 1856.

Mr. Roebuck's Sebastopol Committee presented its report on the 16th of June. This report, after describing the condition of the army, and reviewing the evidence given before the committee, ended with the following general conclusions:—'Your committee report that the sufferings of the army resulted mainly from the circumstances under which the expedition to the Crimea was undertaken and executed. The Administration which ordered that expedition had no adequate information as to the amount of forces in the Crimea. They were not acquainted with the strength of the fortresses to be attacked, or with the resources of the country to be invaded. They hoped and expected the expedition to be immediately successful, and as they did not foresee the probability of a protracted struggle, they made no provision for a winter campaign. The patience and fortitude of the army demand the admiration and gratitude of the

nation on whose behalf they have fought, bled, and suffered. Their heroic valour and equally heroic patience under sufferings and privations have given them claims on the country which will doubtless be gratefully acknowledged. Your committee will now close their report with a hope that every British army may in future display the valour which this noble army has displayed, and that none may hereafter be exposed to such sufferings as have been recorded in these pages.' The Duke of Newcastle, upon whom was laid the chief blame for the disasters to the army in the Crimea, was not the ablest administrator who could have been selected to grapple with the difficulties of the war; but, as a recent historian has observed, the fault at this critical period lay rather with the system and the circumstances than with the man, though it is quite possible that a Minister of greater administrative ability might have succeeded better. This is the view very largely taken now by all unbiassed critics, and it is borne out by a careful examination of contemporary evidence and documents bearing upon the Crimean war.

We have dwelt somewhat at length upon this important episode in English history because it is one to a right understanding of which Mr. Gladstone himself attaches considerable importance, and it is one, moreover, in connection with which his own conduct has been much canvassed. It now only remains briefly to note the points of Mr. Gladstone's defence of the course he pursued during the war. First, he

says that it was the fate of himself and his friends to join the Cabinet of Lord Palmerston at a critical juncture, and to quit it within a fortnight or three weeks. The cause of the secession was that the Premier, having set out with the determination to resist the appointment of the Sebastopol Committee, like his predecessor, Lord Aberdeen, at length came to the conclusion that resistance would be ineffectual, and determined to succumb. The Peelites had no option but to resign, though in reality 'they were driven from their offices.' Yet, as Mr. Gladstone's critics may urge with some force, he might have known, from the temper of the nation and the House, that the appointment of a committee could not be avoided, and it was a pity, therefore, that he took office at all under Lord Palmerston; but, having accepted office, might he not have yielded to the appointment of the committee, seeing that everything inimical to the Ministry was expressly disclaimed? But Mr. Gladstone opposed the committee on the grounds we have seen stated, and he remained stedfast to his friends. He was again blamed for recommending a cessation of the war, when it appeared to him that the original demands made of Russia had been exceeded. The upshot is that 'the question which broke up one Cabinet, and formidably rent another, which agitated England and sorely stained her military reputation in the eyes of Europe, remained then, and remains now, untried by any final court of appeal.' There were conflicting judgments as to where, and upon whom, responsibility should be fixed; and if it were found impossible then rightly to apportion the blame for the Crimean disasters, it is still more impossible now. The wisest and best course to adopt, therefore, is to drop the curtain upon this humiliating scene in English history.

Mr. Gladstone has well shown the difficulties which beset the Peelites after the death of their great leader. It took no less than thirteen years to effect their final incorporation with the Liberal party. For eleven of these thirteen years of disembodied existence, they were independent members. 'They were like roving icebergs, on which men could not land with safety; but with which ships might come into perilous collision. Their weight was too great not to count, but it counted first this way and then that.' These small but powerful independent bodies are always a great puzzle to the two chief political parties in the State. Their very conscientiousness, as it were, acts as a bar to their public usefulness. The Peelites began to cease exercising a strong influence upon the Court and the House, as a political party, with the fall of Lord Aberdeen; and it was a happy thing for each individual member of the body, as well as most conducive to the welfare of the country, when he became identified fully and finally with Liberal opinions.

Commenting upon the comparisons which have been drawn between the Eastern drama of 1853-6 and that of 1875-8, Mr. Gladstone impugns their accuracy. He thus states his own view of the two periods:—

'There was in each case an offender against the law and peace of Europe; Turkey by her distinct and obstinate breach of covenant, taking on the later occasion the place which Russia had held in the earlier controversy. There were in each case prolonged attempts to put down the offence by means of European concert. In 1853-4 these proceeded without a check, until the eve of the war. In 1875-7 the combination was sadly intermittent; but in the singular and unprecedented conference at Constantinople, it was, at least, on the part of the assembled representatives, perfectly unequivocal. In 1854, the refusal of Prussia to support words by acts completely altered the situation; and in 1876-7 the assurance conveyed to Turkey from England, that only moral sussion was intended, had the same effect. The difference was that, in 1854-5, two great powers, with the partial support of a third, prosecuted by military means the work they had undertaken; in 1877 it was left to Russia alone to act as the hand and sword of Europe, with the natural consequence of weighting the scale with the question what compensation she might claim, or would claim, for her efforts and sacrifices.'

Those who differ most from Mr. Gladstone upon the Eastern Question will probably admit that he has here indicated some essential points of difference between the two periods. Another Liberal statesman who held office during the time of the Crimean war, the Duke of Argyll, has also insisted upon the wide divergences which marked the two epochs. In a work recently published, he remarks that upon the Eastern Question, as it occupied public attention in 1854, there was comparatively little difference of opinion. Russia was so clearly in the wrong that little or nothing could be said 'When the imperious character of the in her defence. Emperor Nicholas led him to reject every reasonable compromise, and when the Cabinets of London and of Paris came to the conclusion that they could yield no further, the country was not only practically unanimous, but was even hotly enthusiastic in support of a

war which had become inevitable." \* But the Duke maintains that everything was different in 1876. 'The Eastern Question was raised by native insurrections in the provinces of Turkey, excited and justified by the gross misgovernment of the Porte. The whole Eastern Question therefore as it was then raised, resolved itself into this—how the abuses and vices of Turkish administration were to be dealt with by the Powers which had supported Turkey in the Crimean War, and by those other Powers, embracing all the principal governments of Europe, which had ultimately signed the Treaties of 1856.' Both statesmen held in 1853 that the policy of supporting Turkey in her quarrel with Russia was perfectly consistent with a conviction, or at least a fear, that Turkey was in danger of sinking under internal and irremediable causes of decay. The aggressive spirit, the violence, and the ambition of Russia left English statesmen no option but to support the weaker Power against her enemy.

Nothing is easier than to criticise a policy after it has been shown to have failed, or after it has achieved its end; nothing is so difficult as to resolve upon a policy at the moment when prompt and vigorous measures are required. In passing judgments therefore upon statesmen of whatever party, or section of a party, it is especially incumbent upon us to remember the difficulties by which they have been surrounded. Moreover, that which may seem a wise policy to-day

<sup>\*</sup>The Eastern Question: From the Treaty of Paris, 1856, to the Treaty of Berlin, 1878, and to the Second Afghan War. By the Duke of Argyll.

may have appeared exactly the opposite to the wisest minds of a bygone generation. The science of politics is a varying one; the elements upon which action is founded are never the same in two periods, and it is obviously unjust in the clearer light of a later time ruthlessly to condemn without the strictest investigation the action of statesmen in the past. It is the tendency of political criticism of the day, on both sides, to brand with opprobrious epithets those who are diametrically opposed to the views of the writers. is especially necessary in politics that men make large allowances for the exigencies of time and circumstances. Our political idols are not the flawless angels we deem them, nor are their rivals the monsters of imperfection and apostasy they are sometimes depicted. changes in the standpoint of a leader of political opinion, be he Liberal or Conservative, are nearly always, we will hope, brought about by 'the slow and resistless forces of conviction'—rarely by unworthy and time-serving motives. Looking back upon this episode of the Crimean war, in this spirit, it may not be difficult to perceive that that which is apparently ambiguous in Mr. Gladstone's conduct is capable of an explanation honourable to himself as a man and as a statesman, and is the result of that high devotion to duty which has stamped his character as uniformly upright and conscientious in the eyes of the world.

## CHAPTER XII.

## DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN POLICY-1856-58.

Nogotiations for Peace—Conclusion of a Treaty—The Treaty criticised in both Houses—Sydney Smith on Foreign Interference—Mr. Gladstone's Speech —The Objects of the War—Arbitration for International Differences— Treaty Engagements—The Belgian Press—Lord Palmerston's Reply— Lord John Russell's Resolutions on National Education—Mr. Gladstone's Objections thereto—A curious Division List—A new Loan—The Cost of the War—The Budget—England and the United States—Enlistment of Recruits for the British Army—Mr. Gladstone severely criticises the Policy of the Government-Ministerial Victory-Government and the Session of 1857-Debate on the Address-Budget introduced by Sir G. C. Lewis \_Mr. Disraeli's Amendment—Mr. Gladstone's Criticisms of the Budget —Defeat of Mr. Disraeli's Amendment—The Chancellor of the Exchequer's Financial Policy discussed—The Palmerston Government and its Chinese Policy-Mr. Cobden's Motion-Remarks by Mr. Gladstone-Defeat of the Government—Lord Palmerston's Appeal to the Country—The Bank of England and the Monetary Panic—The Conspiracy to Murder Bill—Excitement in the Country-Mr. Milner Gibson's Resolutions-Powerful Speech by Mr. Gladstone-Ministerial Defeat-Resignation of the Government-A Derby Ministry—Church Rates—Measures for the future Government of India—Three India Bills—Mr. Gladstone on the Danubian Principalities and the Eastern Question-Mr. Disraeli's Budget for 1858-Mr. Gladstone and the Ionian Islands-Appointment as Lord High Commissioner Extraordinary-Incorporation of the Islands with Greece.

At the opening of the session of 1856, negotiations for peace were already in progress, but the prospect of a cessation of hostilities was not regarded universally in England in a favourable light. There were not wanting those who desired the war to proceed for the purpose of recovering the national prestige, which had been partially lost by the disasters in the Crimea,

and by the surrender of Kars to the Russians. on the 31st of March, while the House of Commons was engaged in Committee of Supply, Lord Palmerston interposed to announce that a Treaty of Peace had been concluded at Paris. His lordship said that by the stipulations of the treaty the integrity and the independence of the Turkish Empire would be secured. The treaty was honourable to all the contracting Powers who were a party to it; and while it had put an end on the one hand to a war which every friend to humanity must naturally wish to see concluded, on the other hand it would lay the foundation of a peace which the noble lord trusted, so far as relating to the circumstances out of which the war began, would be lasting and enduring. The British negotiators, Lord Clarendon and Lord Cowley, had not only maintained the honour, dignity, and interests of the country they represented; but by their conciliatory conduct had secured for themselves and their country the respect, esteem, and goodwill of those with whom they had had to do.

The terms of the treaty were subjected to considerable criticism in both Houses. In the Commons, Mr. Herbert, the seconder of the address to her Majesty upon the conclusion of a peace, admitted that there was a want of enthusiasm in the country on the subject of the treaty, but he attributed this not to any dissatisfaction with its terms, but to a variety of causes, the chief of which was a general conviction that if the war had been continued, the British army

would have added largely to the laurels it had won. Animated speeches were delivered by Mr. Sidney Herbert and Mr. Milner Gibson. The latter quoted an extract from a characteristic letter of Sydney Smith to Lady Grey, on the subject of foreign interference. This letter might with advantage have been quoted in the House of Commons on many occasions since the time at which it was written. 'For God's sake do not drag me into another war,' implored the great Whig humourist. 'I am worn down and worn out with crusading and defending Europe and protecting mankind; I must think a little of myself. I am sorry for the Spaniards—I am sorry for the Greeks—I deplore the fate of the Jews; the people of the Sandwich Islands are groaning under the most detestable tyranny; Bagdad is oppressed; I do not like the present state of the Delta; Thibet is not comfortable. Am I to fight for all these people? No war, dear Lady Grey! I beseech you secure Lord Grey's sword and pistols, as the housekeeper did Don Quixote's armour. If there is another war life will not be worth having . . . . May the vengeance of Heaven overtake all the legitimates of Verona! but, in the present state of rent and taxes, they must be left to the vengeance of Heaven. I allow fighting in such a cause to be a luxury; but the business of a prudent, sensible man is to guard against luxury.'

Mr. Gladstone's speech in this debate was an important one, not only from the nature of its arguments, but as the final deliverance, upon this great

question of the Crimean war, of one upon whom rightly or wrongly—considerable blame had been laid at the commencement of the struggle with Russia. He had been charged, together with Sir James Graham and other colleagues of his in the Aberdeen Cabinet, with underrating the dangers and responsibilities of the war. It was alleged, again and again, that their half-measures had precipitated the contest and afterwards increased its magnitude. Mr. Gladstone began by remarking that the question before the House was not a very broad one, inasmuch as the amendment to the address only proposed to substitute the modified word 'satisfaction' for 'joy' at the conclusion of the peace. He regarded the treaty as an honourable one, because the objects of the war had been attained. Referring to the statement that we had become bound, with the other Christian Powers of Europe, not only for the maintenance and integrity of the Turkish Empire against foreign aggression, but also to the maintenance of Turkey as a Mahomedan State, Mr. Gladstone added, 'If I thought, sir, that this treaty of peace was an instrument which bound this country and our posterity, as well as our Allies, to the maintenance of a set of institutions in Turkey which you are endeavouring to reform if you can, but with respect to which endeavour few can be sanguine, I should not be content to fall back upon the amendment of my noble friend (Lord C. Hamilton), expressing that I regarded the peace with satisfaction; but, on the contrary, I should look out for the most em-

phatic word in which to express my sense of condemnation of a peace which bound us to maintain the law and institutions of Turkey as a Mahomedan State.' With regard to the objects for which the war had been undertaken, he denied that they had sought to secure the settlement of any question respecting the internal condition of Turkey. 'The juxtaposition of a people professing the Mahomedan religion with a rising Christian population having adverse and conflicting influences, presents difficulties which are not to be overcome by certain diplomatists at certain hours, and in a certain place. It will be the work and care of many generations—if even then they were successful—to bring that state of things to a happy and prosperous conclusion. But there was another danger—the danger of the encroachment upon, and the absorption of Turkey by Russia, which would bring upon Europe evils not less formidable than those which already existed. Such a danger to the peace, liberties, and privileges of all Europe we were called upon absolutely to resist by all the means in our power.' But Mr. Gladstone went on to regret that a more substantive existence had not been secured to the Principalities, though he owned that this was not the fault of England and France. The neutralisation of the Black Sea he objected to, as meaning nothing more in time of war than a series of pitfalls. Recognised rules should also have been established to regulate interference on behalf of the Christians. The proposal to submit international

differences to arbitration he regarded as a great triumph, though there was a danger that if encouragement should be given to the trumping-up of untenable claims and bad cases as a matter of diplomatic contention between nations, they would end by making more quarrels than they could possibly avert. He held that no country ought to resort to arbitration until it had reduced its claims to what it considered the minimum, and brought them to that state in which they were fit to be supported by force. If they laid down that rule, then a resort to arbitration was indeed a powerful engine on behalf of civilisation and humanity. Under such circumstances, this proposal to establish a system of arbitration (which he rejoiced to say was an English one) might lead to a diminution of what undoubtedly had been a great scourge to Europe of late years—namely, the enormous cost of its military establishments. He was glad to find that the moment at length was come when they had every reason to hope the greatest military powers in Europe -Russia and France-were about to set a bold example in the way of reduction of their military establishments.

Mr. Gladstone then dwelt with much fulness upon the bearings of the twenty-second protocol of the Conference at Paris. He had been pleased with what had passed, especially as affecting Naples, yet it was an innovation to entertain such subjects in the history of conferences of pacification. He wished to know what was the position of the Powers not represented at the Conference; and also what was the exact force or value that belonged to the records inscribed upon the protocols. 'Are they treaty engagements? Certainly they are not. Do they approximate to the character of engagements? If they do, how near do they come to it? If they do not, how far are they from it? If they do not partake at all of the nature of engagements, what are they? They are authoritative documents. Those who like them may claim them as allies and powerful auxiliaries. Those who do not like them may endeavour to depreciate them. Infinite discussions may arise upon their character.' Confusion in international rights and engagements would result from these semi-authoritative records. The most important question was that relating to the state of the press in Belgium. Lord Clarendon had fairly intimated that the scheme which had been suggested could find no support or sympathy in England; but some unfortunate mishap must have occurred, seeing that the protocol recited that all the plenipotentiaries had not hesitated loudly to condemn the excess in which the Belgian newspapers indulged with impunity, by recognising the necessity of remedying the real inconveniences attending the uncontrolled license which was so greatly abused in Belgium. Standing as he did in the first and principal fortress of European freedom, Mr. Gladstone held that these matters imperatively called for explanation. representatives of Prussia and Austria, Baron Manteuffel and Count Buol, had said that the repression



of the press must be considered as a European necessity; Count Walewski, on the part of France (and he hoped he expressed his own views only and not the deliberate intentions of his Sovereign or the Government), had affirmed that legislation was required in the subject of the Belgian press, and that compulsion must be resorted to if necessary; while Count Orloff, on the part of Russia, said he had no instructions, and passed by every one of the topics without comment. Difficulties had arisen in connection with some States, but there had been a general readiness to deal with the Belgian press. Mr. Gladstone earnestly hoped that these declarations affecting Belgium were not indications of policy, but that they had issued lightly from the mouths of those distinguished persons, and that having been uttered they would be regretted and forgotten; they could not be recalled. In the meantime, he demanded, were these charges against Belgium just? If impunity for excesses existed in that country, the evil was not to be attributed to the want of a law, but to the neglect of putting the law in motion. Trial by jury for offences of the press was one of the articles of the Belgian Constitution, and those articles could not be changed at the mere will of either the Government or of the two Houses of the Legislature. 'I think it right,' concluded Mr. Gladstone, 'to point out as clearly as it is possible for an independent member of Parliament to do so, that this appeal to a people, gallant and high-spirited as the Belgians are—an appeal which appears to be contemplated under the compulsion of foreign, and some of them remote, Powers, and having for its object the limitation by the Belgians of their own dearest rights and most cherished liberties—is not a policy which tends to clear the political horizon, but rather one which will darken and disturb it, and cast gloom and despondency over a prospect otherwise brilliant and joyous.'

Lord Palmerston concluded the debate, contending that the objects of the war had been fully accomplished, and in two short years. With regard to the Belgian press, he assured the House that the British Government would be no party to any interference with an independent nation with the view of dictating the steps she should take to gag the press. lieved that the war had settled division in every part of Europe—north, south, east, or west he saw nothing but hope and consolation—and he trusted, in conclusion, that the youngest man who sat in that House might not live to see the time when it would be necessary for the responsible servants of the Crown to call upon the people of the country to support their Sovereign in the prosecution of any new war. amendment having been withdrawn, an address to her Majesty was agreed to, and the curtain thus fell upon the closing scene of one of the greatest and most sanguinary dramas of our national history.

Early in this session Lord John Russell brought forward in the House of Commons a series of resolutions on the subject of National Education. These

resolutions provided (inter alia) that eighty sub-inspectors should be added to the existing number of inspectors; that the sub-inspectors should report on the available means for the education of the poor in each school district; that in order to extend such means the power of the commissioners of charitable trusts should be enlarged, and that the funds then useless or injurious to the public should be applied to the education of the middle and poorer classes of the community; that where such means were not available, the ratepayers should have the power of taxing themselves for the maintenance of schools; that employers of children between nine and fifteen years of age should be required to furnish certificates half-yearly of the attendance of such children at school, and to pay for such instruction. After some discussion, however, the formal motion on the first resolution was withdrawn, and on the 10th of April the House resolved itself into a committee of the whole House, 'to consider the present state of public education in England and Wales.' Lord John Russell now moved his first resolution, referring to the speech he had made upon introducing the whole. The policy of the Government was severely criticised during the debate, and Mr. Gladstone, in alluding to this change of front, said that no doubt Lord John Russell anticipated defeat, and was anxious to extricate the remnants of his army from a dangerous and desperate position. The noble lord intended, no doubt, to save the principle of local influences as opposed to central control, and to save the

principle of religious as opposed to secular instruction; but the House were convinced that in these vital respects he would be entirely disappointed. It had happily been found practicable in England to associate together in the most perfect harmony these two principles—the principle of voluntary exertion, through which they might get heart, and love, and moral influence infused into their school instruction, and the principle of material aid from the State, by which the skeleton and framework of their education were provided. But if he (the speaker) were driven to abandon the voluntary principle, or place exclusive reliance upon it, he should not hesitate to say at once, 'Give me the real education, the affection of the heart, the moral influences operative upon character, the human love, that are obtained through the medium of the voluntary principle, carried out by men whose main motive is one of Christian philanthropy, rather than throw me upon a system which, whatever the intentions of its first mover may be, must sooner or later degenerate into hard irreligion.' Mr. Gladstone then proceeded to discuss the resolutions, which, whether unconstitutional or not, were, he held, of such dangerous tendency that if they were not unconstitutional it was because they involved consequences still more fatal. They tended to create a central controlling power, involving secular instruction and endless religious quarrels.

A division was taken upon the question, 'That the chairman do now leave the Chair,' which was

being virtually against the resolution of Lord John Russell, it was not now proceeded with. The division list revealed curious elements. In the majority were found Mr. Gladstone, Mr. (now Earl) Cairns, Mr. Cardwell, Lord Robert Cecil (now Marquis of Salisbury), Mr. Disraeli, Mr. Milner Gibson, Sir James Graham, Mr. Sidney Herbert, Mr. Lowe, Lord John Manners, Mr. Roundell Palmer (Lord Selborne), and Mr. Walpole. In the minority were Sir Alexander Cockburn, Sir George Grey, Mr. Horsman, Lord Palmerston, Mr. Villiers, and Sir Charles Wood; while the tellers were Lord J. Russell and Sir J. Pakington.

In committee of Ways and Means, on the 22nd of February, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had proposed resolutions authorising a loan of £5,000,000, and the funding of £3,000,000 of Exchequer bills. The war had rendered a large pecuniary provision necessary. Sir G. C. Lewis did not at this time bring forward his annual budget, but made a statement respecting the revenue. It had been so disturbed by speculative fluctuations in the sugar trade, exportation of spirits under drawback to supply the wine deficiency abroad, and other causes, that the whole deficiency was now reckoned at £1,600,000. The actual expenditure had exceeded the estimate by £1,960,000, chiefly under military heads, and they were at that moment in a financial position nearly £4,000,000 less favourable than he had estimated. In reply to the Chancellor's statements upon the real cost of the war

and the amount of debt incurred, Mr. Gladstone said that the debt created within twenty-four months was probably £36,000,000. Many items of further charge would fall in, and altogether the net cost of the war would probably be hardly represented by an addition of 50 per cent. to the £43,000,000, estimated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer as the precise sum which the war had cost us. The resolutions were agreed to. It was not until the 19th of May that Sir G. C. Lewis introduced his budget. Its main features were as follows:—The total expenditure for 1855-6 (including the loan of £1,000,000 to Sardinia) was £89,428,355; and the income £65,704,491. During the past two years of war the total expenditure had been £151,121,307, and for the previous two years of peace it was £102,032,596. In consequence of the preparations which had been necessary, the extra war expenditure would run into the present year; and he calculated the probable expenditure at £82,113,000, and the income from all sources at £71,740,000. The Government did not propose to levy new taxes, but would partially meet the deficiency by a loan of £5,000,000—a considerable sum in addition having been previously arranged for.

Referring to some observations which had been made by Mr. Disraeli on the subject of Sardinia, Mr. Gladstone said he thought the right hon. gentleman justified in his allusions. If Sardinia should entertain schemes of aggression we could scarcely wonder at it. She laboured under great difficulties,

but she must practise self-denial and exhibit a right example to Italy, and in the moral force flowing from that she would find her reward. Mr. Gladstone then proceeded to criticise the budget, denying the assertion that the parsimony of the House of Commons had been the cause of our disasters in the late war. Prussia and Sardinia were examples proving that an efficient army need not be an expensive one. He considered that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was making very narrow provision to meet the expenditure. It was sailing very close to the wind to allow for a surplus of only £160,000 upon a certain expenditure of £77,000,000. Mr. Gladstone again manifested his strong views upon the necessity for meeting national crises as they arose, by observing that 'they should not set the pestilent example of abolishing taxes, and borrowing money in their stead.' Here was a disposition to stimulate increased expenditure, while every effort was directed to stinting the means of meeting that expenditure. The Chancellor's budget resolutions were ultimately agreed to.

The relations between the Governments of England and the United States, which had been strained considerably in 1855, were still further strained in the following year. The Central American Convention of 1850 had given the first shock to a harmonious understanding, but the question which caused the greatest uneasiness was that of the enlistment of recruits in the United States for the British army. On several occasions during the session of 1856 questions were

raised upon this matter, but it was not until the 30th of June that the general subject of our relations with America was fully and formally discussed. On the order for going into committee of supply on that day, Mr. G. H. Moore moved as an amendment the following resolution:—'That the conduct of her Majesty's Government, in the differences that have arisen between them and the Government of the United States, on the question of enlistment, has not entitled them to the approbation of this House.' Mr. Moore not only affirmed that the neutrality law of the United States had been grossly and deliberately violated by persons acting with the approbation of her Majesty's Government; but also that her Majesty's Government had contemplated and sanctioned the violation of the The hon. member accused Mr. Crampton, the British Ambassador, (who had only performed the duties indicated to him by Lord Clarendon) of subverting international law by secretly enlisting the subjects of the United States. Lord Clarendon deprecated all violation of the law, but the whole question turned upon the interpretation of it, and an eminent American lawyer had given an opinion directly contrary to that of the noble earl.

During the debate, which was a very protracted one, Mr. Gladstone delivered a long and able speech. 'It appears to me,' he said, 'that the two cardinal aims that we ought to keep in view in the discussion of this question are peace and a thoroughly cordial understanding with America for one, the

honour and fame of England for the other. I am bound to say that in regard to neither of these points am I satisfied with the existing state of things, or with the conduct of her Majesty's Government. A cordial understanding with America has not been preserved; and the honour of this country has been compromised.' Mr. Gladstone acknowledged that he had great difficulty in coming to a decision what vote to give upon that important question; at the same time he could not meet the resolution proposed by Mr. Moore with a direct negative. Unless the House was prepared to displace the Government, it ought not to weaken their hands. Votes of censure on the Government should only be proposed by those who were able to give effect to the principle contained in those votes. Coming to the actual matter at issue, he asked whether wrong had not been done? 'In the first place he charged the Government with practising concealment; in the second place he maintained that the American Government were deluded and misled. The law was knowingly broken by the agents of the British Government. There was not one hair's-breadth of distinction between the position of Mr. Crampton and the position of the Government. What the American Government complained of was the employment of an agency within the United States, not only to give information, but to tempt, to induce by the offer of valuable considerations, the subjects of the United States to go beyond the United States for the purpose of enlisting. Mr. Crampton did not communicate this to the

American Government. He had not only been guilty of concealment, however, but he had broken the solemn promise that he would confine himself to communicate to the persons who addressed themselves to him the terms on which they would be received into the British service.' Mr. Gladstone then went on to prove the injustice of the charge against the American Government, of having at first confined its complaints to the proceedings of unauthorised persons, and subsequently extended those complaints to the British Minister and his subordinates. 'Aiming as I do at a plain and intelligible statement, I must say the American Government was deceived by the proceedings of the British Government. I say we intentionally broke the law of the Union.' After examining the cases of several recruiting agents, the speaker maintained that Mr. Crampton had been made a scapegoat. He and three consuls had been punished, yet although the British Government acquiesced in and indorsed the acts of its agents, it accepted with satisfaction its own acquittal. Mr. Gladstone thus concluded:—'When I look back to the period when party combinations were strong in the House—when Sir Robert Peel was on those (the Opposition) benches, and Lord John Russell on these—I think, though many mistakes and errors were committed on both sides, that, on the whole, the Government of the country was honourably and efficiently carried on. I believe that the day for this country will be a happy day when party combinations shall be restored on such a footing. But this question,

instead of being a party question, is a most remarkable illustration of the disorganised state of parties; and of the consequent impotency of the House of Commons to express a practical opinion with respect to the foreign policy of the country. Under these circumstances, the only resource left to me is the undisguised expression of the opinions, which I strongly and conscientiously (perhaps erroneously) feel after the study of these papers. I have had the privilege of expressing these opinions freely and strongly-a privilege which I would not have waived on any account when I consider the bearing of the case with respect to the American alliance, which I so highly prize; or with respect to that which I still more highly prize and more dearly love—the honour and fair fame of my country.'

Although no stronger indictment than Mr. Gladstone's was framed against the Ministry, from fear of causing serious embarrassment in the conduct of the affairs of the country, he voted against the resolution, which was negatived by 274 to 80.

The year 1857 was one of unusual political activity and excitement. Animated debates took place upon the foreign policy of the Government, with what result we shall presently see. In the House of Commons, during the debate on the Address, the course of the Ministry was subjected to severe criticism by Mr. Disraeli, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer having made a statement with respect to his financial measures, without replying to the strictures of the

right hon. gentleman, Mr. Gladstone rose to take up the thread of the debate. He expressed his surprise that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should not have replied to the allegations of Mr. Disraeli, on the subject of the foreign policy of the Government, as these charges were definite enough, and, if correct, bore materially upon the advice given to the Crown by its Ministers. There was no promise in the Royal Speech of information on the question which arose respecting the Treaty of Paris, the settlement of the Central American dispute, and the Persian war. He should have been glad if the unhappy events in China had been noticed in a different manner, and with regard to Persia, he desired to know upon whose authority that war had been waged, whether the expedition and its policy had been approved by the Court of Directors of the East India Company, or whether that body was only the nominal authority. He likewise asked at whose charge the war was to be carried He held that if this country was to bear part of -the charge, Parliament ought to have been called Dealing with domestic questions, together earlier. Mr. Gladstone protested against the paragraph relating to the Bank of England being understood to import any foregone conclusion as to the precise terms of the renewal of the Act of 1844, considering it to be completely open to Parliament to determine if that Act were not capable of improvement. With regard to the agitation against the income-tax, he earnestly desired to bring the minds of the people of this country to a

consideration of the question as to what was a just and reasonable scale of expenditure. If the 9d. tax were given up without an equivalent reduction of the estimates, there must either be new taxation or a loan. He was opposed to either; he felt it to be his bounden duty first to lay hold of the expenditure and to battle with the estimates. He knew nothing of an alleged compact between parties in the House of Commons in 1853. 'The pledge of the Government was given in 1853,' said Mr. Gladstone, 'and we received value It referred mainly to something that was to take place in 1860. Four years of the seven have passed away. It is to my mind reasonable and just that the right hon. gentleman on behalf of his friends, and that every man on his own behalf and on behalf of his constituents, should acknowledge the duty of the House of Commons to say now, in 1857, whether the pledges of 1853 are or are not to be fulfilled.' The speaker deprecated the inquiries about a uniform and a varying rate. It was a question between the air and the clouds—had never become practical. There were, however, practical matters before them. 'As far as my duty is concerned,' he continued, 'it will be my effort and labour to secure a fulfilment of the pledges given in 1853. I understood those pledges as the right hon. gentleman understands them. I have not forgotten them. never can forget to the latest day of my life, and I shall always remember with gratitude the conduct of the House of Commons at the period when these

measures were adopted, and the generosity of the sentiments which they evinced. I must endeavour to answer that conduct, at least so far as depends on me; and I shall endeavour to answer that conduct by striving to bring the expenditure of the country and its fiscal arrangements into such a shape as will allow the extinction of the income-tax in 1860.'

The Address was eventually agreed to. budget, however, was looked forward to with great interest, and on the 13th of February it was introduced by Sir G. C. Lewis. It proposed to fix the income-tax, for the next three years, at 7d., as originally done by Sir Robert Peel. The Exchequer would in consequence receive twenty-one instead of twenty millions. The total revenue was estimated at £66,365,000, leaving a surplus over expenditure of £891,000. The total amount of taxes remitted was £11,971,000. By the Chancellor's calculations the entire debt of £40,000,000, arising out of the Crimean war, would be extinguished in twenty years. Gladstone asked for time in which to consider this comprehensive scheme. On the 20th Mr. Disraeli inaugurated a two nights' debate, by moving, 'That it would be expedient, before sanctioning the financial arrangements for the ensuing year, to adjust the estimated income and expenditure in a manner which shall appear best calculated to secure the country against the risk of a deficiency in the years 1858-9 and 1859-60, and to provide for such a balance of revenue and charge respectively in the year 1860 as may place it in the power of Parliament at that period, without embarrassment to the finances, altogether to remit the income-tax.' Mr. Disraeli disclaimed all idea of proposing any measure hostile to public credit, or a vote of want of confidence in the Government. The Chancellor of the Exchequer replied that there was no probability of any deficiency or of an impediment to the remission of the incometax in 1860. He considered Mr. Disraeli's resolution uncalled for, and it would lead to no practical result.

Mr. Gladstone now delivered his general criticisms upon the budget. No man, he affirmed, was more deeply interested in the scheme than himself, for it concerned a plan in every part contradictory to that which he had proposed, and which had been adopted by the present House of Commons. Successive Administrations had aimed at the consolidation and simplification of the financial laws, but the Chancellor of the Exchequer had condemned the labours of Parliament for the last fifteen years. The income-tax, though grievous and inquisitorial, had been introduced to purchase blessings to be wrought out for the mass of the people through its instrumentality. But with what beneficial changes was it proposed now to associate this tax? There was an idea that this year there would be a remission of taxation to the extent of £11,970,000; but omitting war taxes to the amount of £4,470,000—with the cessation of which the Government could not be credited—the remission of

the income-tax in 1857-58 would be only £4,600,000. Against this sum was to be set £1,400,000 to be laid upon tea and sugar; so that the real amount of taxes remitted in 1857-58 would be only a little over £3,000,000; nor was he satisfied that the supposed surplus of £891,000 would be bonâ fide applicable. Mr. Gladstone again insisted upon the obligation of Parliament to adhere to the stipulation entered into with the country respecting the income-tax; and then proceeded to indicate what he considered to be serious flaws in the budget. Its first grave and main defect was that it was based upon an excessive expenditure, and at the proper time he should move that the estimates of expenditure be revised and further reduced. Six millions had been added to the expenditure of the country in four years, quite apart from the war-a fact which suggested most serious reflections. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in saying that he could not estimate the expenditure of a future year, though he could estimate the revenue, had trifled with the House, and treated them like children. 'Yet he had taken the expenditure of 1853-54 as that of 1858-59, which,' for reasons stated by Mr. Gladstone, 'he treated as a pure delusion, calculating that the expenditure of the latter year would exceed that of 1857-58, and that the real wants of the public service were likely to increase. The prospect for next year, taking the income and expenditure of the present, appeared to him to be that there would be a revenue, after deductions, of £61,065,000, to meet an expendi-

ture of £66,724,000, leaving a deficiency of more than £5,600,000, which in 1860 would have augmented to £8,600,000.' The right hon. gentleman next censured the Chancellor of the Exchequer's views upon indirect taxation, and said that the amount of taxes remitted from 1842 to 1854 amounted to £21,985,000—or, deducting taxes imposed, to £14,485,000—which added to the comforts or deducted from the privations of the country; and the increase in the revenue had covered the whole amount of the remissions. 'In Sir Robert Peel's time,' said Mr. Gladstone, 'you were called upon to remit £1,400,000 of indirect taxes, now you are called on to impose indirect taxes to that amount; then you were called on to fill up a deficiency at your own cost, now you are called on to create a deficiency at the cost of others; you were then called upon to take a burden on yourselves to relieve the great mass of your fellow-countrymen, now you are called upon to take a burden off the shoulders of the wealthier classes in order that you may impose indirect taxes upon the tea and sugar which are consumed by every labouring family in the country. I can only say that, for my own part, I entertain on this subject a most decided opinion, and nothing shall induce me to refrain from giving every constitutional opposition in my power to such a proposition. Before the Speaker leaves the chair, if health and strength be spared me, I shall invite the House to declare that, whatever taxes we remove, we will not impose more duties upon the tea

and sugar of the working man. When we are in committee there will be other opportunities of renewing this protest. These things, if they are to be done, shall at least not be done in a corner. The light of day shall be let in upon them, and their meaning and consequences shall be well understood.' The speaker complained strongly of the enormous deficiency created by the proposal of the Government, and expressed his belief that by a wise economy it was practicable to relieve taxation, to reduce expenditure, and to maintain a surplus revenue. 'No consideration upon earth,' he said, in conclusion, 'would induce me by voice or by vote to be a party to a financial plan with regard to which I feel that it undermines the policy which has guided the course of every great and patriotic Minister in this country, and which is intimately associated, not only with the credit and the honour, but even with the safety of the country.'

When the House divided on Mr. Disraeli's resolution, the numbers were—Ayes, 206; Noes, 286. It was therefore lost by a majority of eighty.

On the 6th of March, the Chancellor of the Exchequer introduced an amended scale for the teaduty; but at the same time recapitulated and defended the principles of his financial policy. He moved a resolution to the effect that the duty on tea should be, after the 5th of April, 1857, to the 5th of April, 1858, 1s. 5d. per lb. Mr. Gladstone, fulfilling his pledge to oppose the scheme, moved as an

amendment that the duty be, after the 5th of April, 1857, 1s. 3d. per lb., and after the 5th of April, 1858, 1s. per lb. He still held that the spirit of the proposals of Sir G. C. Lewis was adverse to the principles on which the operations of the last fifteen years had been conducted. The main object of all those operations had been—quite apart from questions of prohibition and protection—to afford an extended, a judicious, and a permanent relief to the consumers of those great commodities imported from abroad which were essentially connected with the comforts of the great mass of the population. He regretted that the plans of her Majesty's Government during the present year, for the first time, made an attack on that longestablished principle. The Chancellor of the Exchequer's scheme would go to the country with a deficiency of Ways and Means, unless the expenditure were reduced. Sir G. C. Lewis had speculated upon a surplus revenue of £800,000; but the alteration of two-pence in the pound in the proposed tea duties would reduce the nominal surplus by about £500,000. Yet he had not provided for the expenses of the wars with China and Persia after the 5th of April, and these, swollen by other items, would leave no surplus income whatever. He condemned the continuance of the war duties in time of peace, and also the manner in which the tea trade had been dealt with in connection with these war duties. If he were an advocate for an extended and organic reform in the Parliamentary representation of the people, he could not desire a better case than the one with which the Government furnished him by their financial policy. They were undoing the beneficial work of former Parliaments, and adding to the burdens which were leviable by law upon the tea and sugar of the people.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in reply, said that Mr. Gladstone had represented the budget unfairly as one of increased taxation, and that if he had been called upon to prepare a scheme upon the principles recommended by the right hon. gentleman, he should be utterly at a loss how to set about it. In the end Mr. Gladstone's amendment was negatived by 187 to 125. A few days later, Mr. Gladstone again referred to the increased public expenditure. discussion on the second reading of the Income Tax Bill, he expressed his conviction that there was a very material connection between the foreign policy of her Majesty's Government and the excessive taxation and high expenditure of the country. He believed it still practicable to bring the income-tax to a close, but if they really did so, it must be by adopting new rules of proceeding. The moment at which it might be practicable to bring the tax to a termination was rapidly passing away, and unless they bestirred themselves, in the course of two or three years it would be much too late, and a sheer waste of time to entertain that question, receing that the relation between the demands of the public service and every provision for meeting them, independently of the income-tax, would

leave no room for maintaining the public credit and satisfying the wants of the country, except through the means which that tax provided.

On the bringing up of the report of the committee of supply (Navy Estimates), Mr. Gladstone for the third time drew attention to this subject, and moved a resolution, to the effect that in order to secure to the country that relief from taxation which it justly expected, it was necessary, in the judgment of the House, to revise and further reduce the expenditure of the State. He based his motion upon two grounds —first, that there did not appear to be an adequate provision for the exigencies of the year; and, secondly, that the expenditure of the country had not of late been kept under due control, but had increased to a point which had become embarrassing, and which threatened to become even alarming. Comparing in detail the present estimates with those of preceding years, he found that the military estimates had in five years gone up from £16,012,000 to £20,517,000. The civil charges required closely watching, and the Executive Government ought to be among the first and most effectual checks for restraining the spirit of laxity in regard to the administration of the public money. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, while admitting that there was much in Mr. Gladstone's speech to deserve consideration, observed that he anticipated no deficiency in the ensuing year. The estimates, though large, were not extravagant, and the Government had done all in their power to reduce them. Mr. Gladstone did not divide the House upon his amendment, and the Ministerial proposals passed.

When the Divorce Bill was warmly contested in the House of Commons, Mr. Gladstone made an earnest and impassioned speech against the measure, eloquently contending for the equality of woman with man in all the rights pertaining to marriage. He dealt with the question on theological, legal, and social grounds. After a prolonged contest, nevertheless, the bill eventually became law.

The Palmerston Government suffered a severe check during this session by a hostile vote in connection with its Chinese policy. It seems that a lorcha called the Arrow, showing British colours, had been seized by the Chinese. The question arose as to the right of the vessel to the protection of the British flag. It was alleged by the opponents of the Government that a vessel built in China, captured by pirates, and recaptured by Chinese, and afterwards manned, owned, and bought by Chinese, could have no claim upon us. Moreover, Sir John Bowring had stated that the license to carry the English flag had expired some time before. Lord Derby, who moved a resolution in the House of Lords condemning the Government, affirmed that the quarrel had arisen entirely from Sir John Bowring's absorbing desire to bring about his own official reception in Canton. The Upper House supported the Ministry by a majority of 36; but in the House of Commons the debate closed with an opposite Mr. Cobden introduced the subject, by moving the following resolution:—'That this House has heard with concern of the conflicts which have occurred between the British and Chinese authorities in the Canton River; and, without expressing an opinion as to the extent to which the Government of China may have afforded this country cause of complaint respecting the non-fulfilment of the Treaty of 1842, this House considers that the papers which have been laid upon the table fail to establish satisfactory grounds for the violent measures resorted to at Canton in the late affair of the Arrow; and that a select committee be appointed to inquire into the state of our commercial relations with China.' In closing an able speech in support of his resolution, Mr. Cobden maintained that Sir John Bowring had not only violated the principles of international law, but had acted contrary to his instructions, and even to express directions from his Government; and he was afraid lest this petty squabble should lead to complications with other nations. The debate extended over four nights, and included speeches by Lord J. Russell, Mr. Lowe, Sir J. Graham, Sir J. Pakington, Sir F. Thesiger, the Attorney-General, Mr. Roundell Palmer, Mr. Gladstone, Lord Palmerston, and Mr. Disraeli. As an exhibition of debating power, the discussion attained a very high level of Parliamentary oratory.

In commencing his speech, Mr. Gladstone protested against making Sir John Bowring a stalking-horse to divert the attention of the House from the real matters

that were in issue. Though Sir John Bowring's conduct was involved in the discussions, they were not trying him judicially. It was their duty to be fair, just, and equitable towards him, but their prime and paramount duty was to consider the interests of humanity and the honour of England. He regretted that, from motives which he did not doubt were nothing more than an excess of zeal for the public service, Sir John Bowring had been led into proceedings in themselves unwarrantable. Yet his policy was not unknown to her Majesty's Government, nor by them disapproved. Mr. Gladstone, with great warmth, defended Sir James Graham from the attack made upon him by Sir George Grey in relation to the appointment of Sir John Bowring. Coming to the general question, he denied that we had festering wrongs against the Chinese; and he reminded the House that no answer had been given to the objection that, if a wrong had been committed by the Chinese in the case of the Arrow, the proper remedy was by reprisals. Replying to the doctrine of the Attorney-General, that the term 'British Subjects' in the treaty meant any Chinese resident at Hong Kong, Mr. Gladstone asked, When we talked of treaty obligations by the Chinese, what were our treaty obligations towards them? Hong Kong was given to us to be a port in which British ships might careen and refit. He demanded whether our contraband trade in opium was not a breach of treaty obligations. Government struggled to put it down, as bound by

treaty? Had they not encouraged it by organising a fleet of lorchas under the British flag? They who put the British flag to the uses to which it had been put stained that flag. The right hon, gentleman then dwelt upon the calamities which the war had inflicted upon the Cantonese, and observed that the resolution of Parliament invited the wisdom of members to put an end to them. He demanded the reasons why we were at war with the Chinese. Were we afraid of the moral effects upon the Chinese if the acts of the Government were disavowed? He implored the House to consider the moral impression which must be produced, and never could be avoided. Mr. Gladstone concluded as follows:—

'Every member of the House of Commons is proudly conscious that he belongs to an assembly which in its collective capacity is the paramount power of the State. But if it is the paramount power of the State it can never separate from that paramount power a similar and paramount responsibility. The vote of the House of Lords will not acquit us; the sentence of the Government will not acquit us. It is with us to determine whether this wrong shall remain unchecked and uncorrected. And at a time when sentiments are so much divided, every man, I trust, will give his vote with the recollection and the consciousness that it may depend upon his single vote whether the miseries, the crimes, the atrocities that I fear are now proceeding in China are to be discountenanced or not. We have now come to the crisis of the case. England is not yet committed. With you, then, with us, with every one of us, it rests to show that this House, which is the first, the most ancient, and the noblest temple of freedom in the world, is also the temple of that everlasting justice without which freedom itself would only be a name or only a curse to mankind. And I cherish the trust and belief that when you, sir, rise to declare in your place to-night the numbers of the division from the chair which you adorn, the words which you speak will go forth from the walls of the House of Commons not only as a message of mercy and peace, but also as a message of British justice and British wisdom, to the farthest corners of the world.'

Lord Palmerston made an effective reply, in which

he reflected strongly upon the combination of parties confederated together upon this question against the He also reminded the House that it Government. had in its keeping not only the interests, the property, and the lives of many of our fellow-countrymen, but the honour, the reputation, and the character of the Mr. Disraeli-before Mr. Cobden rose to close the debate in a brief speech—accepted the construction put upon the motion that it was a vote of censure on the Government. Referring to the alarm over a suggested combination manifested by Lord Palmerston, the right hon. gentleman said that the noble lord was the very archetype of political combination without principle. If Lord Palmerston complained that he was the victim of a conspiracy, let him appeal to the country.

Upon a division being taken on the latter part of Mr. Cobden's resolution, the numbers were—For the resolution, 263; against, 247—majority against the Government, 16. The resignation of the Ministry was expected by the Opposition, though the Government was confessedly strong in the country. Counting upon this support, Lord Palmerston stated in the House of Commons that although, after such a defeat, resignation was the usual and proper course to pursue, he did not believe the rule applied to the present case. Recent divisions had not shown a want of confidence in the Government, and he accordingly felt justified in dissolving.

The Prime Minister had not misinterpreted the



feelings of the nation in adopting this course. The Government gained a considerable accession of strength upon their appeal to the country; and amongst the prominent Liberals who were defeated at the elections were Mr. Cobden, Mr. Bright, Mr. Gibson, Mr. Fox, and Mr. Layard. The Peelites also suffered considerably, although Mr. Gladstone was fortunate in being returned again for Oxford University, unopposed, in conjunction with Sir William Heathcote. Parliament met for a short sitting in December, when a very important financial question came before it. A monetary panic had been created by the stoppage of several banks in the United States, and the directors of the Bank of England appealed, in consequence, to the Ministers of the Crown for authority to increase their issue of notes, and so to suspend the operation of the Bank Charter Act of 1844. The Government at once agreed to this, and brought into Parliament a Bill of Indemnity. Mr. Gladstone, while not opposing the bill, said that the Act of 1844 affected the question of issue only, leaving that of banking untouched, and he thought the present was a fit time for ascertaining the views of Parliament upon the subject. 'Instead of directing the committee to go round again the circle of inquiry into the currency and the law of issue, it would be better employed in investigating the commercial causes of the late panic, and how far they were connected with the state of banking. The effect of referring a heap of subjects to an overburdened committee would be to postpone legislation, and obstruct inquiry into the causes of the recent panic and the present embarrassment.' In the discussion on the third reading of the bill, Mr. Gladstone reiterated these arguments, affirming that great evils arose from the confusion which prevailed between the functions of currency and banking. An amendment by Mr. Disraeli was negatived by a large majority, and the bill passed.

On the re-assembling of Parliament in February, Lord Palmerston introduced his ill-fated Conspiracy to Murder Bill, a measure which involved the downfall of the Government. The futile attempt made by Orsini to assassinate the Emperor of the French had evoked in this country a good deal of sympathy for the latter. The French Imperialists, however, indulged in virulent attacks upon the English people, who were charged with allowing foreign refugees to concoct and mature in this country plots to be carried into execution elsewhere. It was suggested that we should change our laws to meet such cases as the one that had just occurred; but this suggestion excited utmost indignation in the country. Palmerston, nevertheless, acknowledging that the Minister for Foreign Affairs at Paris had urged upon the English Government the necessity of taking some steps in the matter, introduced a bill to amend the law of conspiracy with intent to murder. proposed to make conspiracy to murder a felony, punishable with penal servitude for five years, and to make

the law uniform throughout the United Kingdom. The Government carried the first reading of the bill by an immense majority; but before the second reading came on a feeling had spread throughout the country that the Ministry were simply obeying the behests of the French Emperor in pushing forward this measure. Accordingly, Mr. Milner Gibson moved certain amendments to the effect 'That this House hears with much concern that it is alleged the recent attempts upon the life of the Emperor of the French have been devised in England, and expresses its detestation of such guilty enterprises: that this House is ready at all times to assist in remedying any defects in the criminal law which, after due investigation, are proved to exist: and that this House cannot but regret that her Majesty's Government, previously to inviting the House to amend the law of conspiracy at the present time, have not felt it to be their duty to reply to the important despatch received from the French Government, dated Paris, January 20, 1858, which has been laid before Parliament.' In his speech in moving these resolutions, Mr. Gibson quoted the following passage from the Times:—'When Lord Palmerston has made up his mind to court the goodwill of a foreign Power, no sacrifice of principle or of interest is too great for him. From first to last his character has been the want of a firm and lofty adherence to the known interests of England; and it is precisely from a want of such guiding laws of conduct that our foreign policy has degenerated into

a tissue of caprices, machinations, petty contentions, and everlasting disputes.' Sir Robert Peel said that a bill had been submitted to Parliament at the dictation of a foreign Government. M. de Morny had affirmed that England was a lair of savage beasts and a laboratory of assassins. Sir Robert excited great laughter by quoting an expression used towards Louis Napoleon by one of his flatterers, who thus apostrophised him in the course of an address he was presenting:—'Sire, you are too fond of liberty!'

The one speech, however, during this debate which most deeply impressed the House was that delivered by Mr. Gladstone. Attaching to the French alliance a peculiar and special value, he was, he said, anxious to maintain that alliance. Since 1856, unfortunately, there had been quarrels between the two Governments which had weakened the position of England. But after some other observations—he demanded whether the French despatch had been answered, and whether it did not require an answer. Lord Palmerston had stated that he answered it verbally, but of all explanations that was the most unsatisfactory. It was contrary to the spirit of the Constitution to thrust verbal answers upon the House, and called for notice. The speaker next entered into an examination of the terms of Count Walewski's despatch, in order to prove that they were unfounded and injurious to England. He was emphatically of opinion that it was the absolute and primary duty of the Government to have answered these charges, and to have explained to the

French Government the state of our law. Not only had not this been done, but they were asked to pass the present bill as an answer to Count Walewski's despatch. Mr. Gladstone thus concluded his powerful speech:—

'If there is any feeling in this House for the honour of England, don't let us be led away by some vague statement about the necessity of reforming the criminal law. Let us insist upon the necessity of vindicating that law. As far as justice requires, let us have the existing law vindicated, and then let us proceed to amend it if it be found necessary. But do not let us allow it to lie under a cloud of accusations of which we are convinced that it is totally innocent. These times are grave for liberty. We live in the nineteenth century; we talk of progress; we believe that we are advancing, but can any man of observation who has watched the events of the last few years in Europe have failed to perceive that there is a movement indeed, but a downward and backward movement? There are a few spots in which institutions that claim our sympathy still exist and flourish. They are secondary places—nay, they are almost the holes and corners of Europe so far as mere material greatness is concerned, although their moral greatness will, I trust, ensure them long prosperity and happiness. But in these times more than ever does responsibility centre upon the institutions of England; and if it does centre upon England, upon her principles, upon her laws, and upon her governors, then I say that a measure passed by this House of Commons—the chief hope of freedom—which attempts to establish a moral complicity between us and those who seek safety in repressive measures will be a blow and a discouragement to that sacred cause in every country in the world.'

After speeches from the Attorney-General and others, Mr. Disraeli drew attention to the fact that the real question now before the House was not diplomatic or political, but one between the House and the servants of the Crown. Lord Palmerston then rose to reply. He complained that Mr. Milner Gibson and Mr. Gladstone had departed from the subject under consideration, and had entered into

a long and elaborate attack upon his former conduct as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. When Mr. Gibson stood forth as the champion of the honour of England and the vindicator of the rights of the country against foreign nations, it was the first time in his life that he (Lord Palmerston) had seen him in that character. The policy which he had invariably advocated had been one of submission—of crouching to every foreign Power with which we had any differences to discuss. The right hon. gentleman belonged to a small party who said, 'What care we if this country should be conquered by a foreign force? If we were conquered by a foreign Power they would allow us to work our mills.' Lord Palmerston was interrupted by strong exclamations of dissent from this attack upon Mr. Gibson, and addressing himself to the general question, he implored the House not to rush headlong into a course which would have an entirely contrary effect to the policy advocated by Mr. Gladstone.

The Government, however, were defeated, the numbers being—For the Ministerial bill, 215; against, 234—majority, 19. A scene of great excitement ensued on the numbers being announced, the cheering of the majority being long and vehement. When the division list was published on the following day, it was discovered that the majority was composed of 146 Conservatives, 84 Liberals, and 4 Peelites, viz., Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Cardwell, Mr. Sidney Herbert, and Sir James Graham. Lord Palmerston, being unable

by which his Ministry was surrounded, and having lost the confidence of so large a body of the Liberal party, placed his resignation in the hands of her Majesty. Yet though the Palmerston Government had thus fallen, there was little hope of a strong Conservative Government being formed, or one which could hope to retain the support of those by whose aid the late Ministry had been defeated. The Earl of Derby was sent for, and agreed to form a Ministry. In this Ministry Mr. Disraeli again became Chancellor of the Exchequer.

In the same session, during the debate on the Church Rates Abolition Bill, Mr. Gladstone said that if Church rates were to be abolished it should be done in a manner to mitigate as much as possible the pressure of the change. The whole tone of his speech was very different from that of an uncompromising defender of these rates, and he concluded his observations as follows:—'If it were not that I am actuated by the desire of dealing in a spirit of fairness towards this measure, and did desire to secure its rejection, I should say leave the bill as it stands, and let hon. gentlemen opposite deal as they can with the difficulties in which they would be involved in passing it.'

Mr. Gladstone was opposed to the legislation of the Government in connection with the East India Company. The Chancellor of the Exchequer introduced a series of resolutions, having for their object the abolition of the governing powers of the Company, their transference to the Crown and the home Government, and the better regulation and government of India generally. Mr. Gladstone said that after the decision of the House in February in favour of terminating the existing form of government in India, he could not concur that resolutions were the best form of proceeding. There was considerable feeling in the country against the proposed scheme, and, looking at the state of public affairs, he protested against affirming the motion before the House. In neither plan. could he see the elements of a good scheme; 'and there was great difficulty in attempting to govern by one people another people separated not only by distance, but by blood and institutions. The Court of Directors had been practically a body protective of the people of India, and there ought not to be a less provision for that object. He looked in vain, however, he said, in either plan for any protective power that could be compared with the Court of Directors. There should be a protection afforded to the people of India against the ignorance, error, or indiscretion of the people and Parliament of England. There had grown up a system fraught with danger to the Parliament and to the liberties of the people of England, as well as to India, by the undue and unconstitutional exercise of power by the Executive here, through the treasury and army of India, by which wars were commenced without the knowledge or consent of Parliament, and an accumulation of debt was cast upon India.' There was no limitation of this power, or worse than none, in either plan, and therefore he remonstrated against the Chancellor of the Exchequer's motion. Some progress was made with the resolutions, but the Indian legislation of the Government was destined to be arrested by important political events.

The state of parties this session was a most anomalous one. The Derby Government existed very largely upon sufferance, but that sufferance was not to be prolonged for any length of time. Mr. Gladstone, however (who had declined the post of Secretary for the Colonies, offered him by Lord Derby), gave on more than one important occasion very valuable support to the Ministry. The Governor-General of India, on the 3rd of March, issued a proclamation to the chiefs and people of Oude, promising indulgence to those who came forward promptly and gave to the Chief Commissioner their support in the restoration of peace and order. Lord Ellenborough, President of the Board of Control, forwarded a despatch to the Governor-General, in which he strongly condemned his proclamation. In consequence of these events, Mr. Cardwell in the Commons, and Lord Shaftesbury in the Lords, brought forward motions censuring the Government. The latter was defeated, but the resolution in the Lower House met with a singular fate. New papers having been laid before the House which set in a fresh light the Ministerial policy, Mr. Cardwell was earnestly pressed by many of his own friends to withdraw his resolution. Mr. Gladstone swelled the general voice,

and said that while he hoped the House would concur in the course of withdrawal now proposed to be taken by Mr. Cardwell, he trusted that her Majesty's Government would not refuse to declare that, in the general conduct of affairs in India, under circumstances of unparalleled difficulty, Lord Canning had deserved and would receive approbation. This 'fiasco,' as it was described, gave Mr. Disraeli an excellent opportunity, of which he was not slow to avail himself, to banter the opponents of the Government. This he did at Slough, in a speech full of wit and powerful sarcasm, which afterwards became the subject of exciting debates in both Houses.

The India Bill, No. 2, having been withdrawn by Mr. Disraeli, Mr. Gladstone endeavoured to prevent a revival of legislation upon this subject in the session of 1858 by moving, on the 7th of June, the following resolution:—'That, regard being had to the position of affairs in India, it is expedient to constitute the Court of Directors of the East India Company by an Act of the present session to be a Council for administering the government of India in the name of her Majesty, under the superintendence of such responsible Minister, until the end of the session of Parliament.' He justified his proposal on the ground that it was not practicable during that session to perfect a scheme of government for India that would be worthy of Parliament and of The problem was one of the most formidthe people. able ever presented to any nation or any legislature in the history of the world, and the evils of delay were

insignificant in comparison with those of crude and hasty legislation.

Lord Stanley opposed the amendment, and after a long discussion it was negatived by 285 to 110. After having carried five of their resolutions, the Government abandoned this mode of procedure, and introduced the India Bill, No. 3. The House had agreed to the proposition of a Council for India, but the manner of its constitution gave rise to many amendments. Mr. Bright delivered an important speech, in which he developed his own ideas upon the best form of government for India. If he were Minister, he said, and could get the House to agree with him, he would have five Presidencies in India, perfectly equal, administered from Calcutta, Madras, Bombay, Agra, and Lahore. Among these governments there would be a generous rivalry for good, instead of utter stagnation; evil ambition would be checked, and there would be no governor so great that he could not be controlled. At a later stage of the bill an important amendment, moved by Mr. Gladstone, was carried, providing that, 'except for repelling actual invasion, or under other sudden and urgent necessity, her Majesty's forces maintained out of the revenue of India shall not be employed in any military operation beyond the external frontier of her Majesty's Indian possessions without the consent of Parliament to the purposes thereof.' On the 8th of July the India Bill passed through its final stage in the House of Commons.

Mr. Gladstone delivered during this session a speech, in connection with the Danubian Principalities, which bears a somewhat significant relation to his later views upon the Eastern Question, and is therefore worthy of some attention. He brought forward a motion to the effect, that an address be presented to her Majesty, to submit to her Majesty that that House, bearing in mind the obligations imposed by the Treaty of Paris, so far as they affected the Danubian Principalities, had observed with satisfaction the general tenor and spirit of the Declaration recorded by her Majesty's Chief Plenipotentiary at the Conferences of 1856, concerning the future organisation of those territories; and humbly to convey to her Majesty the earnest hope of the House that in the further prosecution of that important subject just weight might be given to those wishes of the people of Wallachia and of Moldavia which, through their representatives, elected in conformity with the said treaty, they had recently expressed. Mr. Gladstone disclaimed all idea of dictating a policy to the Executive Government, but he was extremely anxious to recognise communications made to the House in the most formal manner by the Executive Government, in a matter deeply affecting the happiness of millions of our fellow-creatures. In adducing reasons for the support of his motion, he placed first the wish and ardent desire of almost the entire population of the Principalities for this union, which had been sanctioned by the Suzerain Power in 1834 in a public

and authoritative document. There were but three Powers represented at Paris to whose opinion upon this question any great moral weight was attached, viz., France, England, and Sardinia, whose judgment was sure to carry with it the mass of European opinion; and a solemn pledge was given by their Plenipotentiaries, afterwards embodied in the Treaty of Paris, that the question should be referred to the judgment of the people of the Principalities. The result of the appeals by the Divans, ad hoc, to the people of Moldavia and Wallachia, had been almost unanimous in favour of the union. All the inhabitants felt that if they hoped to be free, and wished to keep the soil of their country unpolluted by the heel of the stranger, it could only be by the union of the Principalities. After having consulted the people through their representatives, and asking them what was their prayer, it was absurd to refer the whole question to the disposal of five or six commissioners. He admitted that the provinces asked something more than union, viz., that when they were united they should, in order to avoid local jealousies, have a prince or chief, taken from a foreign family. England had given no pledge on this matter, and the great Powers of Europe reserved their decision upon it. But the one great object was union, and Mr. Gladstone said he should assume that the desirability of this was admitted, as bringing about the well-being of the provinces. also observed that the feeling in the Principalities was favourable to Turkey, and the reason why it was

favourable was not that the people were inclined to the creed or traditions of Turkey, but that the relation between these countries and Turkey was one founded upon a liberal basis, and that there had been thus far no sensible collision of interests between them. Let the union not take place, and the Principalities would be a constant source of anxiety to European policy; if it were consummated, a living barrier would be interposed between Russia and Turkey. Nor could the union have the slightest injurious effect on the Ottoman Empire, which had never possessed the sovereignty of the Principalities. 'It would have been better,' said the right hon. gentleman in concluding, 'to have said nothing about the Principalities, to have given no promises, to have announced no policy, if, after stimulating the feeling for the union up to the highest pitch, and holding it out by public authority at Paris as the one thing which, above all other things, was necessary for the welfare and prosperity of those countries, we are now to reverse that policy. I must really say that if it were our desire to embroil the East, to sow the seeds and create the elements of permanent difficulty and disunion, to aggravate every danger which threatens Turkey, to pave the way for Russia, and to prepare willing auxiliaries for Russia in her projects southwards, we could not attain those objects by any scheme better laid down than that of abandoning our pledges and promises, and giving in to the Austrian policy.'

That there was a generous and statesmanlike breadth in this view was not denied, but it was objected by the Government that the effect of the motion would be to dismember the Turkish Empire. The union of the provinces under a foreign prince would make them practically independent of the Porte, and this was in direct contravention of the Treaty of Paris. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said that he could not conceive a step that would be more embarrassing to the Government at that moment than the adoption of Mr. Gladstone's motion. This was negatived by 292 votes to 114.

Mr. Disraeli's budget scheme for 1858 excited but a languid interest in his most formidable opponent, though its author in framing it was beset with unusual difficulties. There was an increased public expenditure, while the commercial embarrassments of the preceding six months had lessened the revenue. Under these and other depressing financial circumstances, Mr. Disraeli's statement was looked forward to with no little trepidation by his own supporters. The principal features of the budget were an operation upon the Exchequer bonds, the equalisation of the spirit duties, and the introduction of a tax on bankers' cheques. From the equalisation of the spirit duties it was hoped to obtain an additional £500,000, and by the stamp on bankers' cheques a sum of £300,000. There was a deficit of £3,990,000; and the Chancellor proposed to postpone the engagement to pay off £2,000,000 of Exchequer bonds, and £1,500,000 of

the war sinking fund. By these means, and with the additional sums from the spirit duties and the tax on bankers' cheques, the deficit would be entirely met, and there would be a surplus revenue. Mr. Disraeli added that he hoped it would still be possible to carry into effect in the year anticipated the 'wise arrangements' of Mr. Gladstone for the extinction of the income-tax.

In the debate on the first resolution put from the chair, Mr. Gladstone expressed his satisfaction that the feeling of the committee was favourable to the spirit of the proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He thanked the latter for the course he had taken with respect to the equalisation of the spirit duties. It would be unreasonable to make large demands upon the Government in the way of many beneficial changes in the commercial system which were yet necessary; it was but fair also that the Government should have the leisure of a recess, in order to enable it to deal satisfactorily with the reduction of expenditure. Yet he did trust there was a prospect of keeping down the scale of the national expenditure to such dimensions as would give a practical character to their expectations, and enable them to cherish the reasonable hope of being able to confer upon the country, at an early date, an actual and positive realisation of its wishes. The budget, which was approved by the country generally, was safe from any serious attack after the conciliatory speech of Mr. Gladstone.

In the autumn of 1858 Mr. Gladstone accepted

from the Earl of Derby the appointment of Lord High Commissioner Extraordinary to the Ionian Islands, and in that capacity went out to Corfu. The Ionian Islands comprise Cephalonia, Cerigo, Corfu, Ithaca, Paxo, Santa Maura, and Zante, with their dependencies. They were erected, in the year 1800, into the Republic of the Seven United Islands. In 1815 they were placed under the protection of Eng-Difficulties having arisen in connection with their government, Mr. Gladstone was despatched on a commission of inquiry. The inhabitants were desirous of severing the connection with England, and of adding themselves to the kingdom of Greece. The Ionians regarded the appointment of Mr. Gladstone as a virtual intimation that the British Government intended to abandon the protectorate. A despatch of the Colonial Secretary somewhat supported this view. The already strained relations which existed between ourselves and the authorities of the islands reached the utmost pitch of tension at this juncture by the surreptitious publication in the Daily News of two important despatches. These despatches, written by the Lord High Commissioner, Sir John Young, were, in substance, a recommendation to abandon all the islands to their own will, with the exception of Corfu, which the commissioner advocated should be retained as a military fortress. On the 27th of January, 1859, the Legislative Assembly of the Ionian Islands, sitting at Corfu, proposed the annexation of their Republic to Greece. A petition to that effect was presented a few

days afterwards to Mr. Gladstone. The right hon. gentleman saw that the firm determination of the Ionian people was incorporation with Greece, and he despatched to the Queen a vote of the Ionian Parliament, affirming that 'the single and unanimous will of the Ionian people has been and is for their union with the kingdom of Greece.' The subsequent history of the affair is soon told. General Sir H. Storks having been appointed Lord High Commissioner of the islands, Mr. Gladstone embarked at Corfu for England on the 19th of February. The Legislative Assembly at Corfu did not allow the question of cession to sleep, however, and after some years of agitation the Ionian Islands were formally handed over to Greece in June, 1864, whereupon the Governor and the British troops immediately retired.

Though it may be contended that England has failed in her duty to Greece of recent years, the Greeks have not forgotten our many previous expressions of goodwill—the cession of the Ionian Islands being amongst them. This cession may be taken as the starting-point of a new movement in Greek national life; and there have been many indications since that Greece desires to attain, and is fitting herself for, a higher position amongst the Powers of modern Europe than she has hitherto enjoyed. In the opinion of many, the time must again come when England will extend to Greece, with her illustrious race and her unexampled history, the hand of cordial and lasting friendship.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## HOMERIC STUDIES.

The Study of Homer—Mr. Gladstone's chief Literary Recreation—His Magnum Opus—Studies on Homer and the Homeric Age—Scope of the Work—General View of the Homeric Controversy—Mr. Freeman's Criticism on Mr. Gladstone's Work—The Poems of Homer and the Sacred Writings—Homer's Place in Education—His Historic Aims—The probable Date of the great Greek Poet—The Homeric Text—Ethnology of the Greek Races—Relation of the Homeric Poems to the Holy Scriptures—Mr. Gladstone's Third Volume—The Polities and the Poetry of Homer—Specimen of Mr. Gladstone's Criticism—Shakespeare and Homer—Other Works by Mr. Gladstone in relation to Homer—Juventus Mundi—Its Objects and Scope—Homeric Synchronism—The Time and Place of Homer—Historical Arguments—Birthplace of the Homeric Poems—The Infancy of Greece—A final Word on Mr. Gladstone's Studies.

To thread the labyrinthine mazes of Homer, and solve the problems associated with his name, has been the chief intellectual recreation, the close and earnest study of Mr. Gladstone's life, in its literary aspect. 'The blind old man of Scio's rocky isle' possesses for him an irresistible and a perennial charm. Nor can this occasion surprise, for all who have given themselves up to the consideration and attempted solution of the Homeric poems have found the fascination of the occupation gather in intensity. It is not alone from the poetic point of view that the first great epic of the world attracts students of all ages and of all countries; Homer presents, in addition, and

beyond every other writer, a vast field for ethnological, geographical, and historical speculation and research. The ancient world stands revealed in the Homeric poems. Besides the many learned tomes which have been written from these special points of view, almost numberless are the volumes based upon the equally debatable questions of the Homeric text and Homeric unity. He who would master this great and intricate, this most difficult subject, must devote the whole of his life to the task; and even then, when an enforced end is put to his labours, he will probably discover (to borrow a simile from Sir Isaac Newton) that, with regard to Homer and Homeric literature, he stands only upon the shore of knowledge, with the boundless ocean lying before him still unexplored.

Conspicuous, then, amongst Englishmen who in the present century have devoted themselves to the study of Homer, stands Mr. Gladstone. He is deeply versed in Homeric lore. There are, doubtless, more erudite scholars upon exclusively Greek questions, but Homer has been to him as a companion. Those who differ from his theories have recognised the enthusiasm with which he has pursued his studies, and the power and grace of the rhetoric with which he has clothed the results of these studies. There has been ascribed to him a 'radical deficiency in the faculty of imagination which makes him throughout rather collect truths by induction than conceive and realise them: rather arrive, by more or less subtle reasoning, at more or less plausible

conclusions, than embody great perceptions with that power of divination which constitutes the genius of a Niebuhr or a Gibbon.' But in the study of Homer the investigator is of necessity thrown back upon the inductive method to a very large extent, and it should be no reproach to Mr. Gladstone in this connection. Probabilities—truly magnificent probabilities—are the chief grounds upon which students have to proceed; and the connecting of these probabilities into a harmonious whole may be a safer and more reasonable process than the construction of a theory from the perceptions and divinations of a powerful imagination.

However, it is our main purpose now simply to indicate the scope of that work which Mr. Gladstone conceived and executed in years of opposition—when the claims of the State upon him were not so exacting—and which may justly be described as his magnum opus. The results of his wide and laborious research were embodied in three large volumes, entitled Studies on Homer.\* The purely technical parts of this work are very elaborate in detail, but these are not the portions which most closely touch the general reader, who is unable to enter into the controversy upon the text of Homer, the Catalogue, and the hundred other ramifications of the subject which are of profound interest to the student. But there are many passages in the work possessing a general value for the breadth of

<sup>\*</sup> Studies on Homer and the Homeric Age. By the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, D.C.L., M.P. for the University of Oxford. Oxford: at the University Press (1858).

their speculation, the lessons and conclusions they endeavour to enforce, the comparisons instituted between ancient and modern genius, and for the admirable spirit and eloquence with which they are written. the Prolegomena Mr. Gladstone explains his objects, takes a general view of the Homeric controversy, shows the place of Homer in classical education, develops the historic aims of Homer, discusses the probable trustworthiness of the text, and attempts to fix the place and authority of the poet in historical inquiry. The writer's objects are high and laudable, if the second branch of effort in his inquiry be difficult of complete attainment and exposition. These objects are described as two-fold: first, to promote and extend the fruitful study of the immortal poems of Homer; and, secondly, to vindicate for them their just degree both of absolute and, more especially, of relative critical value. Even in this eminently practical age we may admit the force of Mr. Gladstone's plea on behalf of classical studies. If the majority of men have little time to devote, either in youth or maturer age, to Greek or Roman literature, there must still be a considerable residue to whom studies in this direction are not only attractive but feasible. But the study of Homer was long neglected, even in the As Mr. Gladstone says, at Oxford in universities. his own day the poems of Homer were read chiefly by way of exception, and in obedience to the impulses They were not a substantive of individual tastes. or recognised part of the main studies of the place,

and the case was rare indeed if they were used as the subject-matter of the ordinary tutorial lectures. Happily, since 1850 there has been witnessed a favourable change in this respect.

An eminent living critic, after describing these three volumes as a great but very unequal work, yet one which would be a worthy fruit of a life spent in learned retirement, pays the following warm tribute to Mr. Gladstone's Homeric researches:—'As the work of one of our first orators and statesmen they are altogether wonderful. Not, indeed, that Mr. Gladstone's two characters of scholar and statesman have done aught but help and strengthen one another. His long experience of the world has taught him the better to appreciate Homer's wonderful knowledge of human nature; the practical aspect of his poems, the deep moral and political lessons which they teach, become a far more true and living thing to the man of busy life, than they can ever be to the mere solitary student. And, perhaps, his familiarity with the purest and most ennobling source of inspiration may have had some effect in adorning Mr. Gladstone's political oratory with more than one of its noblest features. . . What strikes one more than anything else throughout Mr. Gladstone's volumes is the intense earnestness, the loftiness of moral purpose, which breathes in every page. He has not taken up Homer as a plaything, nor even as a mere literary enjoyment. To him the study of the Prince of Poets is clearly a means by which himself and other men may be made wiser and

better.'\* Mr. Freeman's criticism, however, is by no means one of wholesale panegyric. He considers that Mr. Gladstone fails in scientific ethnology, while scientific mythology he does not even attempt. But after making all deductions, the able and competent critic from whom we have just quoted, describes 'these noble volumes' as 'worthy alike of their author and of their subject, the freshest and most genial tribute to ancient literature which has been paid even by an age rich in such offerings. Mr. Gladstone will not rate our admiration the less because we have plainly stated our wide dissent from some important parts of his book.' He has 'done such justice to Homer and his age as Homer has never received out of his own land. He has vindicated the true position of the greatest of poets; he has cleared his tale and its actors from the misrepresentations of ages.'

Mr. Gladstone truly points out that the Greek mind, which became one of the main factors of the civilised life of Christendom, cannot be fully comprehended without the study of Homer, and it is nowhere so vividly or so sincerely exhibited as in his works. Although the poet introduces us to a new and distinct standard of humanity, yet many of his ideas 'almost carry us back to the early morning of our race, the hours of its greater simplicity and purity, and more free intercourse with God.' The Homeric world is alike removed from Paradise and the vices

<sup>\*</sup> Historical Essays. By Edward A. Freeman, M.A., D.C.L. (Second Series.)

of a later heathenism; yet if we seek that genuine knowledge of man which is founded upon experience, 'how is it possible to over-value this primitive representation of the human race in a form complete, distinct, and separate, with its own religion, ethics, policy, history, arts, manners, fresh and true to the standard of its nature, like the form of an infant from the hand of the Creator, yet mature, full, and finished, in its own sense, after its own laws, like some masterpiece of the sculptor's art?' Comparing the poems of Homer with the sacred writings of the Old Testament, Mr. Gladstone observes that they can never be put into competition with the latter as touching the great fundamental, invaluable code of truth and hope. But he has an excellent passage pointing out how the one may be regarded as supplementary to the other. Examining the history of the race, as regards the Greeks, it is Homer that furnishes the point of origin from which all distances are to be measured. 'The Mosaic books, and the other historical books of the Old Testament, are not intended to present, and do not present, a picture of human society or of our nature drawn at large. Their aim is to exhibit it in one master relation, and to do this with effect they do it to a great extent exclusively. The Homeric materials for exhibiting that relation are different in kind as well as in degree; but as they paint, and paint to the very life, the whole range of our nature, and the entire circle of human action and experience, at an epoch much more nearly analogous to the patriarchal time

than to any later age, the poems of Homer may be viewed, in the philosophy of human nature, as the complement of the earliest portion of the Sacred records.'

But while the poems of Homer possess this extrinsic value as a faithful and vivid picture of life and manners, they have also an intrinsic greatness, which has given their writer the first place in that marvellous trinity of genius—Homer, Dante, and Shakespeare. Mr. Gladstone shows how the transcendency of his poetical distinctions has overshadowed his many other claims and uses. The passage in which this thought is elaborated is an effective piece of literary criticism.

With regard to the place due to Homer in education, while admitting the greater value of the tragedians as practical helps and models in Greek composition, Mr. Gladstone maintains that, after all allowances, they cannot, in respect of purely poetic titles, make good a claim to that preference over Homer which they have extensively enjoyed. Estimating the tragedians from another point of viewwith reference to what they tell and not the manner of telling it—the argument for assigning to Homer a still greater share of the attention of our youth becomes stronger. Excepting the works of Aristotle and Plato, the writer remarks that he knows of no author offering a field of labour and inquiry either so wide or so diversified as that which Homer offers. In public schools he is read chiefly for his diction and poetry, even by the most advanced; and if he is to be read for his skill in the higher and more delicate parts of the poetic calling, as well as for his humanity and his never-ending lessons upon manners, arts, and society, he must be read at the universities. 'He is second to none of the poets of Greece as the poet of boys; but he is far advanced before them all—even before Æschylus and Aristophanes—as the poet of men.'

Such is the high educational aspect in which Mr. Gladstone views Homer, using the word educational now in its highest and fullest sense. Upon the historic aims of Homer—a topic perhaps still more interesting —he writes at even greater length. Accompanying that breadth and elevation which betoken the highest genius, we have in Homer an even more rare fulness and consistency of the various instruments and organs which make up the apparatus of the human being. Nothing is more extraordinary in his poems than their general accuracy and perfection of minute detail. 'Where other poets sketch, Homer draws; and where they draw, he carves. He alone, of all the now famous epic writers, moves (in the Iliad especially) subject to the stricter laws of time and place; he alone, while producing an unsurpassed work of the imagination, is also the greatest chronicler that ever lived, and presents to us, from his own single hand, a representation of life, manners, history, of morals, theology, and politics, so vivid and comprehensive, that it may be hard to say whether any of the more refined ages of Greece or Rome, with their clouds of authors and their multiplied forms of historical record,

are either more faithfully or more completely conveyed to us.' Mr. Gladstone endorses Wachsmuth's observation that even the dissolution of Homer's individuality does not get rid of his authority. The presumption against Homer as an historical authority does not spring from the fact that he mixes marvels with common events (else Herodotus and others would be destroyed along with him), but from the fact that his compositions are poetical, and men have ceased to connect the poetical form of composition with history. But this does not impugn his authority. The question that arises is, 'In what proportions has he mixed history with imaginative embellishments?' question Mr. Gladstone discusses, and amongst other matters in favour of Homer's historical authority he cites the great multitude of his genealogies, their extraordinary consistency one with another and with the other historical indications of the poems; their extension to a very large number, especially in the Catalogue, of secondary persons; that remarkable production, the Catalogue itself, taken as a whole: the accuracy with which the names of races are handled and bestowed, the particularity of the demands made upon the various characters for their family history, and the numerous legends or narratives of prior occurrences with which the poems are thickly studded. This is a fairly strong list of something more than probabilities, putting out of sight numberless minor indications of the true historic spirit. Mr. Gladstone holds it to be a fair inference from the Odyssey, that

the Trojan war was sung to the men and the children of the men who waged it. Some of the signs of historical accuracy are preserved even at considerable cost of poetical beauty. There are, moreover, a multitude of minor shadings running through the poems which, from their very nature, we are compelled to suppose real. Yet there is, after all, no point more important for the decision of this question of historical authority than the general tone of Homer himself, and this point Mr. Gladstone expounds and enlarges upon, comparing Homer with other writers who have never been able perfectly to simulate the ancient life which they profess to depict. He reminds us that Strabo confuted Eratosthenes, who had treated the great sire of poets as a fabulist. Having contended keenly for the historic aim and character of Homer, Mr. Gladstone observes finally upon this branch of his subject, 'It does not appear to me reasonable to presume that Homer idealised his narration with anything like the license which was permitted to the Carlovingian romance; yet even that romance did not fail to retain, in many of the most essential particulars, a true historic character; and it conveys to us, partly by fact and partly through a vast parable, the inward life of a period pregnant with forces that were to operate powerfully upon our own characters and con-Homer must be read in a higher sense than that which divests poetry of its relation to reality.

As to the probable date of Homer, Mr. Gladstone places it within a generation or two of the Trojan

war, assigning as his principal reasons for so doing the poet's visible identity with the age, the altering but not yet vanished age of which he sings, and the broad interval in tone and feeling between himself and the very nearest of all that follows him. On the question of the probable trustworthiness of the text of Homer, he formulates the two following propositions, as fitting canons of Homeric study:-- '1. That we should adopt the text itself as the basis of all Homeric inquiry, and not any pre-conceived theory nor any arbitrary standard of criticism, referable to particular periods, schools, or persons. 2. That as we proceed in any work of construction by evidence drawn from the text, we should avoid the temptation to solve difficulties found to lie in our way by denouncing particular portions of it as corrupt and interpolated: should never set it aside, except upon the closest examination of the particular passage questioned: should use sparingly the liberty even of arraying presumptions against it, and should always let the reader understand both when and why it is questioned.' Mr. Gladstone's mode of procedure in thus accepting the Homeric text as genuine has many advantages, and is infinitely preferable to other methods which have been shown to have failed. But it is also not without its dangers and difficulties, as his critics have demonstrated, for 'arguments as to the theology, history, manners, geography of the Homeric age, founded on the assumption that the received Homeric text is all equally genuine, are

essentially unreal.' Convenience is not a safe reason to assign for accepting the genuineness of the text.

The task which Mr. Gladstone undertakes with regard to the text of Homer, is the extremely difficult one of endeavouring to 'divaricate true from false,' and of marking, at least as probable, what he 'conceives to be un-Homeric, interpolated, or altered': and he has confessedly thrown much light upon these questions by his laborious investigations. After the failure of so many constructive and destructive hypotheses, he asks, 'Who will ever again venture to publish an abridged or remodelled Iliad?' We do not propose to follow the author through his examination of the fortunes of the Homeric text, nor to reproduce his arguments showing that the presumptions of the case are favourable, and not adverse, to the general soundness of the text. The final point discussed in the Prolegomena is the place and authority of Homer in historical inquiry. Clearing the question of all incumbrances, and admitting the cases where the authority of the bard must be clearly and distinctly set aside, Mr. Gladstone yet submits the following thesis:—'That, in regard to the religion, history, ethnology, polity, and life at large of the Greeks of the heroic times, the authority of the Homeric poems, standing far above that of the whole mass of the later literary traditions in any of their forms, ought never to be treated as homogeneous with them, but should usually, in the first instance, be handled by itself, and the testimony of later writers

should, in general, be handled in subordination to it, and should be tried by it, as by a touchstone, on all the subjects which it embraces. Homer is not only older by some generations than Hesiod, and by many centuries than Æschylus and the other great Greek writers, but enjoys a superiority in another important respect, viz., that no age since his own has produced a more acute, accurate, and comprehensive observer. Judging from internal evidence, he alone stood within the precincts of the heroic time, and was imbued from head to foot with its spirit and its associations.'

The second division of the first volume of this work is devoted to the ethnology of the Greek races, and is a practical application of the principles laid down in the preliminary essay. After stating the scope of the inquiry, the author treats of the Pelasgians and cognate races; of the Phœnicians and the outer geography of the Odyssey; of the Catalogue and the Hellenes of Homer; of the respective contributions of the Pelasgian and Hellenic factors to the compound of the Greek nation; of the three greater Homeric appellatives; of various Homeric titles, and of the connection of the Hellenes and Achæans with the East. The second volume possesses more general interest, being devoted to a consideration of the religion of the Homeric age. Mr. Gladstone discusses the mixed character of the supernatural system or Theomythology of Homer, and this is followed by an elaborate section on the traditive element of the Homeric Theo-mythology, and likewise one on its inventive element. The fourth section deals with the composition of the Olympian Court, and the classification of the whole supernatural order in Homer; in the fifth the Olympian community is considered in its members themselves; while the sixth discusses their influence on human society and conduct. Section seven is on the traces of an origin abroad for the Olympian religion; and this is succeeded by sections on the morals of the Homeric age, woman in the heroic age, and the office of the Homeric poems in relation to that of the early Books of Holy Scripture.

The last section possesses special interest, and it is one, therefore, to which we will refer more fully. Mr. Gladstone observes that both the Books of Scripture and the Homeric poems open up to us a scene of which we have no other literary knowledge. They are by far the oldest of known compositions, and while perfectly distinct and independent of each other they are in no point contradictory, while in many they are highly confirmatory of each other's genuineness and antiquity. Yet as historical representations, and regarded from the human aspect, they are very different. 'The Holy Scriptures are like a thin stream, beginning from the very fountain-head of our race, and gradually, but continuously, finding their way through an extended solitude into times otherwise known, and into the general current of the fortunes of mankind. The Homeric poems are like a broad lake outstretched in the distance, which provides us with a mirror of one particular age and people, alike full and marvellous, but which is entirely dissociated by a period of many generations from any other records, except such as are of the most partial and fragmentary kind. In respect of the influence which they have respectively exercised upon mankind, it might appear almost profane to compare them. In this point of view, the Scriptures stand so far apart from every other production, on account of their great offices in relation to the coming of the Redeemer and to the spiritual training of mankind, that there can be nothing either like or second to them.'

Yet, granted this, the Homeric poems still bear a relation to the Scriptures which no other work in the world can claim. Speaking of their influence, mediate and immediate—for they not only moulded the mind and nationality of Greece, but through Greece exercised an immeasurable influence upon the world—Mr. Gladstone quotes the saying of M. Renan: —'Les vraies origines de l'esprit humain sont là; tous les nobles de l'intelligence y retrouvent la patrie de leurs pères.' Passing over the great purpose of the Scriptures as regards the relations between God and man, there remains a relative parallelism between the oldest of these Holy Scriptures and the works of Homer. not only because they are the oldest known compositions does the author establish relations between these writings, but because each confirms the testimony of the other by numerous coincidences of manners. 'That Divine Word which tells us that the Redeemer came in the fulness of time indirectly points to the

great transactions which filled the space of ages since the Fall, when time was not yet full; and the greatest of all those great transactions, surely, were the parts played by Greece and Rome, as the representatives of humanity at large in its most vigorous developments. They, too, as well as the discipline of the Jewish people, doubtless belonged to the Divine plan.' Thus the early Scriptures and the Homeric poems combine to make up for us a sufficiently complete form of the primitive records of our race. Mr. Gladstone admirably and eloquently insists, however, that it is a mistake to bring some portions of the Sacred Writings before the tribunal of the mere literary critic.

Rome has given the most extraordinary example on record, says the author, of political organisation, while Greece has had for its share the development of the individual; but the seeds of both these perfect growths, and all that they involved, would appear to be contained in the Homeric poems. It is further observed that of the personal and inward relations of man with God, of the kingdom of grace in the world, Homer can tell us nothing; but of the kingdom of Providence much, and of the opening powers and capabilities of human nature, apart from Divine revelation, everything. Mr. Gladstone closes this section of his work with a comparison of the times preceding the Advent with those which have followed it. Christianity, marshalling the intellectual and material forces of the world in her own cause, has for the past fifteen hundred years marched at the head of human

civilisation. Its learning, art, and genius have been those of the world, as have almost, though not absolutely, its greatness, glory, grandeur, and majesty. 'He who hereafter, in even the remotest age, with the colourless impartiality of mere intelligence, may seek to know what durable results mankind has for the last fifteen hundred years achieved, what capital of the mind it has accumulated and transmitted, will find his investigations perforce concentrated upon and almost confined to that part, that minor part, of mankind which has been Christian.' In this view Mr. Gladstone will secure an infinitely wider suffrage than Gibbon. Before the Advent, however, the treasure of Divine revelation was committed into the hands of a race who were almost forbidden to impart it, and who were certainly not the leaders of the world. But the construction and promulgation of laws and institutions, arts and sciences, with the chief models of greatness in genius or in character, were committed to others; and to Homer was assigned the first and most remarkable stage of this development.

The third volume is divided into four sections:—
1. Agorè; Polities of the Homeric Age. 2. Ilios;
Trojans and Greeks compared. 3. Thalassa; the outer Geography. 4. Aoidos; some points of the Poetry of Homer. The first and last of these sections are the most attractive, both as regards the subjects discussed and the very able critical handling which the author gives them. Dealing with the strong development of political ideas in Greece, Mr. Gladstone

combats the opinion expressed by Mr. Grote that in Homer the sentimental attributes of the Greek mind appear in disproportionate relief, as compared with its more vigorous and masculine capacities—the powers of acting, organising, judging, and speculating. If the sentimental attribute is to be contra-distinguished from the powers of acting, organising, and judging, then Mr. Gladstone knows of nothing less sentimental in the after history of Greece than the characters of Achilles and Ulysses, than the relations of the Greek chiefs to one another and to their people, than the strength and simplicity which laid the foundationstones of the Greek national character and institutions, and made them the counterparts of the structures now ascribed to the Pelasgians—so durable and massive, though simple, as to be the marvel of all time. author proceeds to illustrate the vitality and depth of the influences derived from these sources, which have given to Greece such an enviable immortality:—

'Even when the sun of her glory had set there was yet left behind an immortal spark of the ancient vitality, which, enduring through all vicissitudes, kindled into a blaze after two thousand years; and we of this day have seen a Greek nation, founded anew by its own energies, become a centre of desire and hope, at least to Eastern Christendom. The English are not ashamed to own their political forefathers in the forests of the northward European Continent; and the later statesmen, with the law-givers of Greece, were in their day glad, and with reason glad, to trace the bold outline and solid rudiments of their own and their country's greatness in the poems of Homer. Nothing in those poems offers itself—to me at least—as more remarkable than the deep carving of the political characters, and what is still more, the intense political spirit which pervades them. I will venture one step further, and say that of all the countries of the civilised world there is no one of which the inhabitants ought to find that spirit so intelligible and accessible as the English: because it is a spirit

that still largely lives and breathes in our own institutions. There we find the great cardinal ideas which lie at the very foundation of all enlightened government; and there we find, too, the men formed under the influence of such ideas; as one among ourselves, who has drunk into their spirit, tells us—

"Sagacious, men of iron, watchful, firm, Against surprise and sudden panic proof."

And again-

"The sombre aspect of majestic care,
Of solitary thought, unshared resolve."\*

It was surely a healthful sign of the working of freedom that in that early age, despite the prevalence of piracy, even that idea of political justice and public right, which is the germ of the law of nations, was not unknown to the Greeks.'

The fourth division of this concluding volume is sub-divided into several sections, concerned respectively with the plot of the Iliad; the sense of beauty in Homer, human, animal, and inanimate; Homer's perception and use of number; Homer's perceptions and use of colour; Homer and some of his successors in epic poetry, particularly Virgil and Tasso; some principal Homeric characters in Troy—Hector, Helen, Paris; and the declension of the great Homeric characters in the later tradition. The section in which comparisons are instituted between Homer and Milton, Dante, Virgil, and Tasso, is distinguished for its broad and profound criticism, though some of the judgments expressed will probably be found to clash with those formed by readers who have their individual favourites amongst the epic poets. It is not possible for any critic, in weighing the merits of the world's greatest poets, to secure the perfect assent of

<sup>\*</sup> Merope, by Matthew Arnold.

his readers to all his conclusions. But Mr. Gladstone strikes out from his subject many illuminating rays. For a specimen of his larger criticism, as opposed to the more minute, take the following passage:—

'To one only among the countless millions of human beings has it been given to draw characters, by the strength of his own individual hand, in lines of such force and vigour that they have become, from his day to our own, the common inheritance of civilised man. Ever since his time, besides finding his way into the usually impenetrable East, he has provided literary capital and available stock-in-trade for reciters and hearers, for authors and readers, of all times and of all places within the limits of the western world—

"Adjice Mæoniden, a quo, ccu fonte perenni, Vatum Pieriis ora rigantur aquis."

Like the sun, which furnishes with its light the close courts and alleys of London, while himself unseen by their inhabitants, Homer has supplied with the illumination of his ideas millions of minds that were never brought into direct contact with his works, and even millions more that have hardly been aware of his existence. As the full flow of his genius has opened itself out into ten thousand irrigating channels by successive sub-division, there can be no cause for wonder if some of them have not preserved the pellucid clearness of the stream. Like blood from the great artery of the heart of man, as it returns through innumerable veins, it is gradually darkened in its flow. The very universality of the tradition has multiplied the causes of corruption. That which, as to documents, is a guarantee, because their errors correct one another, as to ideas is a new source of danger, because everything depends upon constant reference to the finer touches of an original, which has escaped from view. And this universality is his alone. An Englishman may pardonably think that his great rival in the portraiture of character is Shakespeare; a Briton may even go further, and challenge, on behalf of Sir Walter Scott, a place in this princely choir second to no other person but these. Yet the fame of Hamlet, Lady Macbeth, Othello, or Falstaff, and much more that of Varney, or Ravenswood, or Caleb Balderstone, or Meg Merrilies, has not yet come, and may never come, to be a world-wide fame. On the other hand, that distinction has long been inalienably secured to every character of the first class who appears in the Homeric poems. He has conferred upon them a deathless inheritance.'

Concerning the leading point in this criticism,

Shakespeare's fame gradually approaches that of Homer in its universality. Leaving out of view Homer's chief heroes, the character of Hamlet is even now one of the most familiar of poetic creations—so familiar that it is known throughout the civilised world. Yet not three centuries have elapsed since he sprang into being from the imagination of his creator; and it is neither an impossible nor an unreasonable conjecture to assume that when the age of Shakespeare shall be that of the present age of Homer, the great characters of his dramas will claim the immortality and universal fame which now belong alone to the deathless personages of the Homeric poems.

It was objected when these volumes originally appeared that all their main arguments were constituted upon the basis of strict textual accuracy, a theory which cannot be maintained; and that the inconclusive, not to say illusory, character of the premises re-acts on the conclusion. 'Where we admire most,' said one writer, 'we are least persuaded: reasonings intended to drive home convictions to our minds seem to reach them with no momentum, and waste their power in the air; while, on the other hand, we are constantly struck with the refined ingenuity of incidental portions, and with the deep sense of poetical beauty, and Homeric beauty in particular, which they manifest.' On questions of topography, the Ulyssean wanderings, &c., Mr. Gladstone's conclusions have also been called in question;

nor in a field so vast can we wonder at these wide divergences of opinion. But one great admission has been made—and this will be readily endorsed by all readers—respecting such Homeric commentaries as Mr. Gladstone's: they afford lessons of value in the exalted idea which they tend to form of the ethical acquirements of man in what is termed a rude state. It has also been well remarked that these volumes are an indirect but complete refutation of the fallacy which has spread so much of late years—that the advance of man, generation by generation, is to be measured solely by his progress in intellectual acquirement. The intellect may reach the highest point of advancement, and yet a rapid decline of morality supervene, unless there is some greater preservative of virtue and morals than intellectual culture.

But we must now leave this work, which in its elaborate detail is a colossal monument of the author's patience and Homeric knowledge. Seldom is it that so great an undertaking is successfully executed by one engaged in the business and turmoil of political life. But we perceive in the author's enthusiasm and deep love of his subject the incentives which alone rendered such a work possible under these circumstances. In the concluding words of the last volume, Mr. Gladstone himself touches upon the pleasing and engrossing nature of his task. He observes that to pass from the study of Homer to the ordinary business of the world is to step out of a palace of enchantments into the cold grey light of a polar day. 'But the spells,' he

adds, 'in which this sorcerer deals, have no affinity with that drug from Egypt, which drowns the spirit in effeminate indifference: rather they are like the φάρμακον ἐσθλὸν, the remedial specific, which, freshening the understanding by contact with the truth and strength of nature, should both improve its vigilance against deceit and danger, and increase its vigour and resolution for the discharge of duty.'

This chief work upon Homer, Mr. Gladstone has followed up by kindred writings at various periods. In 1877, he contributed a paper on 'The Dominions of Odysseus' to Macmillan's Magazine, and also wrote the Preface to Dr. Schliemann's Mycenæ. Thirty years ago or more he contributed to the Quarterly Review an article upon Lachmann's Iliad, a paper regarded with great interest at the time of its appearance by all students of Homer. Nor has he confined himself altogether to Homeric criticism, for there appeared some years ago a small quarto volume of translations from the first book of the *Iliad*, and of some separate passages, executed by Mr. Gladstone and Lord Lyttel-Two works, however, by Mr. Gladstone, in relation to Greece and Homer, still remain for notice, and these are worthy of more than a mere mention. Juventus Mundi: Gods and Men of the Heroic Age in Greece, was published in 1869; and Homeric Synchronism appeared in 1876.\*

<sup>\*</sup> See also articles by Mr. Gladstone upon subjects connected with Homer in the Contemporary Review and the Nineteenth Century. The volume on Homer, in Macmillan's series of Literature Primers, edited by the Rev. J. R. Green, was also written by Mr. Gladstone. It gives, in a

Juventus Mundi was mainly the product of the two recesses of 1867 and 1868, and in it the author states that he has endeavoured to embody the greater part of the results at which he arrived in the Studies on Homer and the Homeric Age. The reader will therefore find the later work valuable as putting him in possession of the main lines of Mr. Gladstone's arguments and opinions upon the Homeric problems. Some modifications of previous views had been arrived at in the course of the intervening period of ten years. With regard to the ethnology of Homer, a further prosecution of the subject as relating to the Phœmicians, brought out much more fully and clearly what Mr. Gladstone had before only hinted at, and he now awarded to them a highly influential function in forming the Greek nation. This modification consequently acted in an important manner upon any estimate of Pelasgians and Hellenes respectively. The author had now felt warranted in giving a larger space to deduction, and a smaller one to minute particulars of inquiry in a work which aimed at offering some practical assistance to Homeric study in our schools and universities, 'and

succinct form, the author's views upon Homer the man, the Homeric question, and the many ramifications of the general subject expounded at greater length in the *Homeric Studies*. In delivering his valedictory address as Lord Rector of the University of Edinburgh, on the 3rd of November, 1865, Mr. Gladstone took for his subject, 'The place of ancient Greece in the Providential order of the World;' and visiting Eton College, in June, 1879, he gave a lecture on the great Greek poet, in the library of the College. Mr. Gladstone endeavoured to prove that the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were really the work of one poet, Homer—that they were constructed at the time of the Trojan war, and were not the composite works of several persons compiled at a much later period of the Greek history.

even at conveying a partial knowledge of this subject to persons who are not habitual students.' But while anxious to commend to readers generally conclusions from the Homeric poems, which appeared of great interest with reference to the general history of human culture, and of the Providential government of the world—he was much more anxious to encourage and facilitate the access of educated persons to the actual contents of the text. Mr. Gladstone pointed out that the doubts cast upon the origin of the poems have assisted in fostering a vague instinctive indisposition to laborious examination; 'the very splendour of the poetry dazzles the eye as with whole sheets of light, and may often seem almost to give to analysis the character of vulgarity or impertinence.' He did not shrink from his main object, however, namely, to provoke the close textual study of the poet, as opposed to the second-hand method of seeking for information anywhere save in Homer himself.

A knowledge of the text of Homer is not, as Mr. Gladstone insists, by any means a commonplace accomplishment, seeing that this text involves an aggregate of 27,000 lines, as full of infinitely varied matter as an egg is full of meat. And readers require to be very careful in accepting unverified statements of what is, or is not, in Homer. Touching the difficulty of the unsettled and transitionary state of the rules and practice with respect to Greek names, and to the Latin forms of them, Mr. Gladstone follows many high authorities in adopting generally the Greek

names of the deities and mythological personages instead of the Latin ones.

The introductory chapter of this work is a more succinct statement than appeared in the author's previous treatise of the historic character of Homer's poetry; the second deals with the three great appellatives, Danaoi, Argeioi, and Achaioi; the third is concerned with the Pelasgoi; the fourth is entitled 'Hellas'; the fifth is upon the Phœnicians and the Egyptians; the sixth on the title 'Anax Andron'; the seventh on the Olympian system; the eighth on the divinities of Olympos; the ninth gives a further sketch, and presents the moral aspects, of the Olympian system; the tenth discusses the ethics of the Heroic Age; the eleventh its polity; the twelfth the resemblances and differences between the Greeks and the Trojans; the thirteenth the geography of Homer; the fourteenth his plots, characters, and similes; while the fifteenth and concluding chapter treats of miscellaneous aspects in Homer—his idea of beauty; his physics, metals, and measure of value; his use of number, and his sense of colour.

Homeric Synchronism is an inquiry into the time and place of Homer. The author speaks with more certitude upon these important questions than he had done hitherto, believing that the time had at length come for serious efforts to connect the poems of Homer, by means of the internal evidence which they supply, with events and personages which are now known from other sources to belong to periods, already

approximately defined, of the primeval history of the human race. Mr. Gladstone is fully impressed with the magnitude of the task before him, and admits that a rational reaction against the irrational excesses and vagaries of scepticism may readily degenerate into the rival folly of credulity. Opposing wrong does not always carry with it the assurance of being right. While conservative as regards the poet, Mr. Gladstone observes that he is radical and dissenter to the uttermost as respects several of the opinions too freely accepted from a lazy and incomplete tradition. He agrees with Lucian in his criticism of some preceding critics, that they would have been saved from much erroneous and much gratuitous speculation had they been more careful to observe the primary laws of poetic insight, and to acknowledge that seal and stamp with which it is the prerogative of supreme genius to authenticate its handiwork. His own method had been to distinguish carefully between certainty and probability, between knowledge and conjecture; and he had been especially careful to found all inquiries and conclusions upon a close and painstaking examination of the Homeric text, and to conduct his researches according to the established laws of evidence as opposed to the lawlessness of ipse dixi and of arbitrary assertion. It is not only an important investigation, but one of supreme interest, that of attempting to fix the place of Homer in history, and also in the Egyptian chronology.

Mr. Gladstone had contended for, or admitted, in

previous works, the following six points:—That the poems of Homer are in the highest sense historical; that there was a solid nucleus of fact in his account of the Trojan war; that there did not yet exist adequate data for assigning to him, or to the Troïca, a place in the established chronology; that his own chronology was to be found in his genealogies, which were usually careful and consistent; that there was no extravagance in supposing he might have lived within a half century after the war, though he was certainly not an eye-witness of it; and that there was very strong reason to believe that he flourished before the Dorian conquest of the Peloponnesos. On another occasion he also pointed out that the time might be at hand when, with the aid of further investigations, it would be possible to define with greater precision those periods of the Egyptian chronology to which the Homeric poems, and their subject, appeared to be related. Data of considerable importance had been gradually gathering and enlarging, so that the missing links now recovered might frame at least the disjecta membra of a chain of evidence. Assyrian as well as Egyptian research now supplied valuable material in aid of the general design.

In this new work the author carried his affirmative propositions much further, and offered presumptive evidence which bore students greatly on the road to proof, of a distinct relation of time between the Homeric poems and other incidents of human history, which are extraneous to them, but are already in the main reduced into chronological order and succession; namely, portions of the series of Egyptian dynasties. With this relation established, a further relation indirectly followed to the chronology of the Hebrew records. Mr. Gladstone has, perhaps naturally, by many critics been regarded as too sanguine in thus endeavouring to build up an unbroken body of actual history from materials which can never be completely harmonised. But the manner in which he has pursued his inquiries, and the results he arrives at, betoken more than ingenuity; they establish a fair theory of presumption and credibility. More they could not do, owing to the extraordinary exigencies of the case.

This treatise upon Homeric Synchronism is divided into two parts. The first treats of matters connected generally with the place and date of Homer in history, and the topics dealt with in this relation are—the Plain and Site of Troy; the Hissarlik Remains, discovered by Dr. Schliemann; the European habitat of Homer, and his priority to the Dorian Conquest; and the Authorship of the Hymn to the Delian Apollo. In the second part the author endeavours 'to drive at least a single pile into the solid ground of history, as a kind of first fruits from modern Egyptology; as a beginning towards marking out, and fencing in, the historical limits both of Homer's subject and of his My warrant for introducing the topics treated in Part I. is to be found in this—that, if Homer were an Asiatic Greek, of the period most commonly supposed, at some time after the Dorian Conquest, it is

idle to talk of placing him in any particular relation to the Egyptian chronology, and a waste of labour to trace out in detail his possession of Egyptian knowledge and traditions; for, to Asiatic Greece, Egypt was but the name of one among foreign lands, and its wide-reaching Empire was neither any longer felt in action, nor witnessed of by patent and accessible records, nor retained in the living memory of man.' Having thus prepared his ground, Mr. Gladstone contends in the second part of his work that there are detailed matters as of fact in the poems, which fit themselves on to other matters of fact, either originally made known, or brought into greatly clearer light, by the Egyptian monuments; also, that we have a large number of scattered indications of Homer's Eastern, and especially his Egyptian, knowledge, in his cosmological ideas and representations, as well as in a variety of incidental notices. By the aid of these contentions and arguments the author leads up to the one grand, general conclusion—that there are probable grounds of an historical character for believing that the main action of the Iliad took place, and that Homer lived, between certain chronological limits, which may now be approximately pointed out to the satisfaction of reasonable minds.

Having thus indicated the general aims of this work, it is not our purpose to trace its arguments in detail, nor the steps by which Mr. Gladstone shows that the Homeric poems could not have had their birthplace in Asia, nor have been composed after the

Dorian invasion: but before leaving the subject, we will quote the following passage on the extraordinary interest which attaches to the warlike incidents of the infancy of Greece:—'We have examples in modern times, and even in the most recent experience, of great states which owe all their greatness to successful war. The spectacle offered to a calm review by this process, is a mixed, sometimes a painful one. So, too, it seems, that the early life of the most wonderful people whom the world has ever seen, was largely spent in the use of the strong hand against the foreigner. That people was nursed, and its hardy character was formed, in the continuing stress of danger and difficulty. the voyage of Argo, the march of the Seven against Cadmeian Thebes, the triumphant attack of the Epigonoi, the enormous and prolonged effort of the war of Troy, the Achaian and so-called Danaan attempts against Egypt, were not wars or expeditions of simple conquest. They were not waged in order to impose the yoke upon the necks of others. And yet, though varied in time, in magnitude, in local destination, they seem, with some likelihood at least, to present to us a common character. They speak with one voice of one great theme: a steady dedication of nascent force, upon the whole noble in its aim, as well as determined and masculine in its execution. For the end it had in view, during a course of effort sustained through so many generations, was the worthy, the paramount end of establishing, on a firm and lasting basis, the national life, cohesion, and independence.'

We now part from these Homeric studies, into which Mr. Gladstone has thrown so much perception, learning, and research. The Siege of Troy and the Wanderings of Ulysses possess an undying charm, whether their chief incidents be wholly fictitious, partially fictitious, or veritable history; and no nobler study could well engage the leisure of a man of culture. It is worthy of note, in conclusion, that after all his just and lofty encomiums upon the Homeric records, Mr. Gladstone deduces from them the great abiding lesson, that they do but 'show us the total inability of our race, even when at its maximum of power, to solve for ourselves the problem of our destiny; to extract for ourselves the sting from care, from sorrow, and, above all, from death; or even to retain without waste the knowledge of God, where we have become separate from the source which imparts it.'

The author has brought to his investigations of the Homeric text an almost unexampled patience, an intrepid judgment, and a keen analytical faculty; but, above all, there glows throughout his pages that spirit which is the outcome of the Christian religion—a religion higher and deeper than that of the great Greek poet, a religion which has transfigured all the relations of this mortal life, and which forms a great and indissoluble link uniting humanity with God.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## THE SESSION OF 1859—THE BUDGET OF 1860 AND THE FRENCH TREATY.

Public Affairs in 1859—The Reform Question—Introduction of the Government Bill—Its Rejection moved by Lord John Russell—Speech of Mr. Gladstone—Defeat of the Government—Appeal to the Country—The new Parliament—Resignation of the Derby Ministry—A Palmerston Administration—Mr. Gladstone again Chancellor of the Exchequer—Opposed on appealing for Re-election at Oxford—Returned by a large Majority— The Budget of 1859—Debate on the Peace Conference—Roman Catholic Relief Act Amendment Bill—Animated Scene in the House—Negotiation of the French Treaty—The Budget of 1860—Details of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Proposals—Relief of Trade and Commerce—The Commercial Treaty and Free Trade—A new Bond of Union with France— Tribute to Mr. Cobden—Customs Reform Scheme—Proposed Abolition of the Paper Duty—Character of the Financial Statement of 1860—Attacks upon it by the Opposition—Repeal of the Paper Duty strongly opposed— Views of Protectionist Paper-makers—The Lords and the Paper Duty— Important Deputation to Lord Derby—The Bill rejected—Feeling in the Country—A Constitutional Question—The Chancellor of the Exchequer carries his Proposals for the Reduction of the Duty on Foreign Paper—Mr. Gladstone on Lord John Russell's Reform Bill—The Chancellor of the Exchequer elected Lord Rector of Edinburgh University.

A REVOLUTION of the political wheel—wholly unexpected in some quarters, but predicted in others—once more brought Mr. Gladstone into office in the year 1859. At the commencement of this session, and indeed for some time previously, two important questions agitated the public mind, almost to the exclusion of all others. These were, first, the state of our foreign relations, especially as affecting France,

Austria, and Italy; and, secondly, the subject of Parliamentary Reform. Unable to struggle against the unmistakable expression of the popular will, the Derby Government had pledged itself to bring in a Reform Bill; but long before this measure was even framed, or Parliament had assembled, the feeling in the country had been greatly stirred by Mr. Bright and others in favour of a large extension of the franchise. The member for Birmingham had expressed himself with more than his wonted fervour upon this question, and the supporters of the Government indulged the belief that he had damaged the cause he intended to advance by the 'violence' of his advocacy. In several great public meetings, Mr. Bright had condemned and denounced in vigorous rhetoric the existing state of the representation, and had demanded a wide extension of the suffrage. For a time, the turbulent demonstrations which took place in various parts of the country acted as a check upon many moderate men, who had hitherto advocated a fair measure of Parliamentary reform, and there was a partial reaction amongst certain classes against the movement.

But the time had come when some concessions must be made, and it was admitted, alike on Conservative as on Liberal benches, that upon the nature of the Ministerial proposals in this direction depended the very stability of the Government itself. After interpellations from the Opposition, and remonstrances against delay, the Chancellor of the Exchequer fixed the 28th of February for the first reading of the

Government Reform Bill. Amid a scene of great expectation and excitement, Mr. Disraeli, on the day named, proceeded to unfold the details of the scheme. It was not intended, he said, to alter the limits of the franchise, but to introduce into the borough a new kind of franchise, founded upon personal property, and to give votes to persons receiving £10 yearly from the funds, or £20 in pensions, as well as to graduates in the universities, ministers of religion, members of the legal and medical profession, and various other classes. The bill also recognised the principle of the identity of suffrage between the counties and the towns, of which the effect would be to add about 200,000 persons to the county constituency. Mr. Disraeli said the change which it would be his duty to recommend would not rest upon the principle of population, nor upon that of property joined with population. He finally described the Government measure as 'wise, prudent, adequate to the occasion, conservative, and framed by men who reverence the past, are proud of the present, and confident of the future.'

The bill was allowed to pass its first reading, but it speedily became evident that it was not regarded with satisfaction by the country, and also that it would meet with strenuous opposition in the House. The Liberals, joined by a portion of the Conservatives, objected strongly to the clause by which it was proposed to take away from freeholders in boroughs the franchise by which they were now qualified to vote in

counties. The Ministry was also weakened by the secession of two of its prominent members, Mr. Walpole and Mr. Henley, who as Conservatives could not support the measure. On the order for the second reading of the bill on the 20th of March, Lord John Russell moved the following amendment:—'That this House is of opinion that it is neither just nor politic to interfere in the manner proposed by this bill with the freehold franchise as hitherto exercised in counties in England and Wales; and that no readjustment of the franchise will satisfy this House or the country which does not provide for a greater extension of the suffrage in cities and boroughs than is contemplated in the present measure.' The mover of this resolution delivered an able speech in its support, concluding with the expression, 'With regard to this great question of Reform, I may say that I defended it when I was young, and I will not desert it now that I am old.'

There were members who, like Mr. Horsman, thought the bill could be modelled in committee, so as to meet the wishes of the country, but others, again, —as, for example, Mr. Sidney Herbert—while disclaiming all question of party feeling, supported the amendment. Mr. Bright maintained that the measure excluded the working classes, told them they were dangerous, and that these were privileges they ought not to share. Mr. Gladstone, who gave a modified support to the Government on this occasion, began by remarking upon the singular coincidence of opinion

on all sides with regard to this great question of Parliamentary Reform. As there was no controversy traceable to differences between political parties, he regretted that the House was now in hostile conflict, with a division before them, which would estrange those by whose united efforts alone a satisfactory settlement could be come to. He objected to the form of the resolution, but confessed that if they could have had a strong Government he should have been induced to vote for it. He saw, however, that after carrying the resolution the Opposition would pursue separate courses. The House should do what it could in respect of the bill, and the Government had a claim upon members. Sketching the failures of previous Governments, amidst the laughter and cheers of the House, Mr. Gladstone remarked, 'In 1851 my noble friend, then the First Minister of the Crown, approached the question of Reform, and commenced with a promise of what was to be done twelve months afterwards. In 1852, he brought in a bill, and it disappeared, together with the Ministry. In 1853 we had the Ministry of Lord Aberdeen, which commenced with a promise of Reform in twelve months' time. Well, 1854 arrived; with it arrived the bill, but with it also arrived the war, and in the war was a reason, and I believe a good reason, for abandoning the bill. Then came the Government of my noble friend the member for Tiverton, which was not less unfortunate in the circumstances that prevented the redemption of those pledges which had been given to the people from

the mouth of the Sovereign on the Throne. In 1855 my noble friend escaped all responsibility for a Reform Bill on account of the war; in 1856 he escaped all responsibility for Reform on account of the peace; in 1857 he escaped that inconvenient responsibility by the dissolution of Parliament; and in 1858 he escaped again by the dissolution of his Government.' Pointing the moral of these failures, the speaker affirmed that they strengthened the misgivings of the people as to the reluctance of the House to deal with this question, made it more hazardous to interpose obstacles, and required the progress of the Government bill to completion. Examining the measure itself, he announced that he could not be a party to the disfranchisement of the county freeholders in boroughs; he could not be a party to the uniformity of the franchise; he could not be a party to a Reform Bill which did not lower the suffrage in boroughs. Unless they could have a lowering of the suffrage, it would be better not to waste time upon the subject. He approved that portion of the bill relating to the redistribution of seats, but put in a strong plea on behalf of the small boroughs.

These boroughs were the nursery ground of men who were destined to lead the House and be an ornament to their country; and he maintained that the extension and the durability of our liberty were to be attributed, under Providence, to distinguished statesmen introduced to the House at an early age. These were reasons for going into committee. If they passed the

opponent and successor.' To this representation, the Rev. R. Gresley, chairman of Mr. Gladstone's committee, replied, in a letter addressed to Mr. Mansel. He denied that Mr. Gladstone had been guilty of an act of tergiversation by accepting office in the new Ministry, and added that he simply gave a silent vote against turning out the Government of Lord Derby on a motion of want of confidence at that time and under those circumstances. There was no ground for the charge of inconsistency. The nomination took place on the 27th of June. The Dean of Christ Church proposed Mr. Gladstone in a Latin speech, of which the following is a translation:—'Members of the University of Oxford, I stand before you to offer to your suffrages the Right Hon. William Ewart Gladstone, D.C.L., of Christ Church, as your representative in Parliament. There is no need that I should be copious in eulogising him to you, although I could do so with ease. For who among you but knows how convincing is his argument, how great his experience as a statesman, how universal his information, how pure his life, how deep his religious feeling? In a word, who can so worthily as he represent our University in the legislative assembly of the country? But I would further remind you that it is not any ordinary man who can bear this dignity, not any one taken at random who is fit to be honoured with your votes, but one whose talents, eloquence, weight, learning all may see, and may not only see but respect: one, in short, with regard to whom, if elected, there shall be but one

opinion; that the University most worthily enjoys and most worthily exercises the right of election. For him, therefore, so often returned by you, I again solicit your votes, and in my opinion no adequate cause either has been or can be alleged for breaking through the standing custom of the University: once elected, always elected.' The Rev. Dr. Wynter, President of St. John's College, proposed the Marquis of Chandos. Both candidates had their warm and apparently equal bodies of supporters at the nomination. The polling, however, which continued for five days, closed with a large majority for the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the numbers being—For Mr. Gladstone, 1,050; Lord Chandos, 859.

The new Chancellor had but scant breathing space in which to prepare his financial statement, which was produced in the House of Commons on the 18th of July. The budget, nevertheless, was a very important one in some respects, and was awaited with eagerness by the House. Mr. Gladstone, after recapitulating the estimates of income made by his predecessor, in the previous year, which had been exceeded by the results, stated that the estimated revenue of the current year would be £64,340,000, and the estimated expenditure of the year, £69,207,000. There would thus be a gross deficiency in the current year of £4,867,000. This being the time when it became the Committee to make adequate and effective provision for the wants of the year, it was likewise a time when its attention should be rigidly con-

fined to those wants, the charges being of exceptional character, especially those for the army and navy. The Committee, therefore, were not to busy themselves with comprehensive plans of finance upon the present occasion; next year it would be necessary to enter upon larger views of our financial system, for next year the income-tax would lapse, as well as certain war duties upon tea and sugar; on the other hand, the Long Annuities would fall in. How were they to raise the necessary funds to meet the present deficiency—by borrowing or by taxes? The sum required was a large one, but it ought never to drive the British Parliament to the expedient of augmenting the National Debt, which nothing but dire necessity should induce it to do. It appeared to him that a loan ought not to be resorted to; that there never was a period when the people of England were more satisfied of the justice and necessity of the demands upon the public purse, or more able or willing to meet those demands. Then, if they were driven to taxes in order to meet the expenditure of the next year, should the taxation be direct or indirect? It was not desirable to augment the malt duty, nor would it be wise to increase the spirit duties. would be impolitic to increase the duties of customs There consequently remained the income-That tax had been originally introduced for two objects: first, to make reforms in our fiscal system; secondly, to meet sudden public exigencies; and when it was for the dignity, honour, and safety of the

country that efforts should be made to augment the national defences, the income-tax was, above all others, a regular and legitimate resource. The gross deficiency to be met was £4,867,000. By a re-arrangement of the credit allowed to maltsters they could procure almost immediately a sum of £780,000. The deficiency would thus be reduced to a little over £4,000,000, and this it was proposed to raise by an augmentation of the income-tax. It now stood at the rate of 5d. in the pound, and an additional 4d. would yield something over £4,000,000. He proposed that this additional sum should be levied on incomes amounting to upwards of £150, but that incomes under that sum should pay only  $1\frac{1}{2}d$ . extra; and he also proposed that the augmented tax should be leviable upon the first half-yearly payment after the resolution should have been adopted by the House. This addition to the tax, added to the sum derived from the maltsters, would produce £5,120,000. Deducting the whole deficiency of the year, there would thus remain a surplus of £253,000. Mr. Gladstone concluded with 'this appeal:—'Instead of ascribing to the great English people a childish impatience to meet necessary demands, with which they were never chargeable, I, on the contrary, shall rely on their unyielding, inexhaustible energy and generous patriotism, and shall be confident that they will never shrink from or refuse any burden required in order to sustain the honour or provide for the security of the country.'

On the order for going into committee of Ways and Means, some days afterwards, Mr. Disraeli criticised his rival's budget, and reviewed the financial policy of the late Government. He strongly protested against the continuance of the current enormous expenditure, which rendered it necessary to fritter away the treasure of the income-tax. The nation, he maintained, could not go on raising £70,000,000 annually; and he demanded that France and England 'should mutually prove, with no hypocrisy, but by the unanswerable evidence of reduced armaments, that they really desired peace.' Such an agreement would render practicable the cessation of the income-tax in 1860.

Mr. Gladstone, replying to Mr. Disraeli's objection to the proposed mode of levying the income-tax, said the House of Commons was as much entitled to tax six months' profits as those of twelve months. The effect of the modification would be to throw half the additional tax on the year 1860-61, making it part of the Ways and Means, not of the current year, but of the next. Coming to more general matters, the Chancellor of the Exchequer observed that Mr. Disraeli had endeavoured to impress upon the present Government the necessity of preserving the alliance between England and France—which had become almost the law of our foreign policy—and he said, 'Require the diminution of armaments.' He (Mr. Gladstone) expressed his opinion that the moment the state of Europe allowed, it would be the duty of the English Government to use every effort in that sense. But why should Mr. Disraeli, he asked, denounce all congresses? Three months before Lord Malmesbury was despatching telegrams for the purpose of bringing about a congress. For himself, he was not prepared to subscribe to all Mr. Disraeli's opinions as to the peace; he would rather reserve his judgment than pledge himself, in the present state of Europe, by giving a distinct approval of its terms. The budget resolutions were eventually agreed to.

Shortly before the close of the session an important debate arose upon the Peace Conference, with special reference to the affairs of Italy. Lord Elcho proposed an address to her Majesty, stating that, in the opinion of the House, it would be consistent neither with the honour nor the dignity of this country to take part in any conference for the purpose of settling the details of a peace the preliminaries of which had been arranged between the Emperor of the French and the Emperor of Austria. Mr. Kinglake moved upon this the 'previous question.'

The Chancellor of the Exchequer at once rose and said that, so far as he and his colleagues were concerned, they were prepared to meet the motion with a direct negative; but if the House was of opinion that it was inconvenient to entertain the motion at all, they were ready to concur in that which Mr. Kinglake had made without any concert with them. Lord Elcho's motion spoke of taking part in a conference for the purpose of settling the details of the peace arranged between the two Emperors. He was not aware of any

such intention. The details of the peace would be settled by the belligerents themselves, and what remained would be, not the details of the peace, but great questions of European policy, vitally affecting the happiness of Italy. The principal point made by Lord Elcho was the contrast between the neutrality of the late and that of the present Government. He (Mr. Gladstone) gave credit to the late Government, represented by Lord Malmesbury, for their intention, and for a restless but a sound and manly assiduity to maintain peace, and there had been no departure from that neutrality on the part of the present Government. The object of the noble lord's motion was to prevent the Government from taking part in the conference, lest they should be hostile to Austria. To disclaim such a motive, he said, was needless, and would be disparaging. There was no foundation for such a supposition. It was the desire of the Government to see Austria strong, flourishing, and happy; but it did not follow that they might not have their own feeling and conviction that she might, by another policy, better discharge her duties and consult her own separate and individual interests. To understand the present position of Austria it was necessary to go back for the last forty-five years. During that interval, wherever liberty raised its head in Italy it was crushed by the iron hand of Austria, and abuses were re-established in all their rigour. The position of Sardinia, with her improved institutions, became of necessity a standing danger to Austria. It was necessary that the British

Government should consider what, in the present state of circumstances, was best for Italy, for Austria, and for Europe. Might not Austria be stronger out of Italy than in it? This was an opinion which might be held by honest men, and he was himself strongly of that opinion. But the true policy of this country, according to Lord Elcho, was the policy of nonintervention. What, then, he asked (here Mr. Gladstone triumphantly held aloft the blue-book), is the policy adopted and enforced in these papers? The questions the noble lord had referred to had not been proposed before going into the conference. The mover of the resolution had argued that we had confidence in the Emperor of the French or we had not, and in either case we should not enter the conference. He (Mr. Gladstone) agreed that if we had not confidence, and were essentially at variance with France, it would be a question of prudence how far we should enter into the conference; but he could not understand the other branch of the dilemma, which would come to this: that whatever might be the liberal sentiments of the Emperor of the French, we would refuse to assist him, but leave him to struggle with his difficulties. This was a recommendation which he concluded by earnestly entreating the House to discountenance.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer was followed (amongst other speakers) by Mr. Horsman, Mr. S. Herbert, Lord John Russell, Mr. Disraeli, and Lord Palmerston. It was generally agreed, however, that Mr. Gladstone's speech had effectually disposed of the

motion; and Lord Elcho, expressing himself satisfied with the discussion, withdrew it.

Perhaps the most exciting debate of the whole session arose over the Roman Catholic Relief Act Amendment Bill. By this measure, which was supported by the Government, it was proposed that a Roman Catholic should be eligible for the office of Lord Chancellor of Ireland. To English members like Mr. Newdegate, and Irish members of the Orange type of Mr. Whiteside, the bill appeared a suicidal one. Pass it, and the Constitution was gone. Mr. Newdegate, in particular, it is to be feared, must have spent many sleepless nights while this attempted base betrayal of the Protestant liberties of England was going forward. The hon. member moved the rejection of the measure, which he described as being an invasion of the Protestant Constitution, and as practically abrogating the settlement of 1829. Mr. Whiteside was equally strong in his denunciation of the bill, and in an unfortunate moment for himself, brought Mr. Gladstone's name into his speech in such a manner as to rouse the ire of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. physical atmosphere of the House was very sultry (it was now the middle of July), but the mental speedily transcended it. An eye-witness, describing the scene, remarked that he was not surprised at the loudness of Mr. Newdegate's groans and the doubledyed Orange hue of Mr. Whiteside's stupendous oration, especially seeing how nearly within the grasp of the latter had been the Irish Chancellorship; but

what was surprising was the tone and manner of Mr. Gladstone. While the Irish Secretary, Mr. Cardwell, was balancing the two parties in Ireland in his elaborate sentences, Mr. Gladstone stood at the bar in an attitude very near akin to contempt for the business which the Government official was manipulating so unskilfully; but after Mr. Whiteside had spoken, and his own time came, Mr. Gladstone 'started up, with his face full of fire and his manner flushed with vigour, and delivered a masterly, keen, crushing speech of ten minutes—no more—which was at once dignified, humorous, argumentative, and piled up with grand phraseology, concentrating every faculty of an orator and all the scorn of an offended Member of Parliament. It was one of those bursts of earnest speechmaking which are now so rare in the House of Commons, and which are worth waiting through a long, hot summer night to listen to. It even roused Mr. Walpole into a diluted imitation of a style which had so successfully carried the House along with it; it brought out sarcasm and irony bitter enough from Mr. Disraeli; elicited something of the insolent tone of 1857 from Lord Palmerston; animated the torpor of Sir George C. Lewis; and actually flashed inspiration into the lymphatic and apathetic idiosyncrasy of Sir William Somerville; while it put the House into one of those fevers of excitement which, when they begin about one o'clock in the morning, are so difficult to allay. Certainly one has not for a long time witnessed so decided a case of that electrification of

the House and its prolonged effects with which at times it is affected in the strangest and strongest manner.' The measure thus violently opposed has since become law, as, indeed, have many other measures which led men who failed to move with the spirit of the times to look for the setting of the sun of England's greatness. Yet that noble but impalpable inheritance, the English Constitution, still remains to us—as great, as glorious, as durable at this day as in any generation of our past history.

The year 1860 will be for ever memorable as a new point of departure in British commerce and manufactures. The country was at peace with foreign nations; calmness and moderation reigned at home; and Parliament was enabled to proceed unfettered with those wise and beneficent acts of legislation which have caused the session to occupy one of the most conspicuous positions in our domestic history. England and France were to be in the future bound together, not by such ties of alliance as the mutual dread of war involves, but by the deeper and more lasting ties of friendship and of peace. Mr. Cobden, commissioned by, and acting in unison with, the English Government, was successful in negotiating with France a commercial treaty based on Free Trade principles—a treaty which gave an impetus to the trade of this country whose far-reaching effects are felt even to our own day. Whatever may be the views of Englishmen upon the general tenor and spirit of the Government of the third Napoleon, his ready acquiescence in, and determination to carry through, a treaty based upon hitherto much-combated principles, redounded greatly to his sagacity and penetration. The fight in France against the adoption of Free Trade was not so long or so bitter as in England; but the Emperor's resolve, notwithstanding, involved a sharp and severe struggle. In the end the treaty was successfully negotiated by Mr. Cobden, under the auspices, and with the aid, of Mr. Gladstone as our Finance Minister.

The conclusion of this treaty invested the budget of the year with additional importance. awaited with the deepest interest and solicitude, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer fixed the earliest day possible for its delivery, namely, the 6th of February. Unfortunately, however, Mr. Gladstone was seized with indisposition, and the statement was postponed until the 10th. On that day the Minister appeared before a densely crowded assembly. The House was packed to the doors and through all its approaches. Never in the memory of members had a financial statement possessed such fascination. Combating his physical weakness so far as to come down to the House three days before the time originally specified after the announcement of his illness, the Chancellor of the Exchequer 'walked up the floor of the House with an alacrity which was surprising, and bent his head with conscious pleasure before the hearty cheers which greeted his appearance.' There was in him, apparently, no trace of weakness, physical or mental.

The House having resolved itself into a committee of Ways and Means, Mr. Gladstone rose, and at once plunged into his statement. 'Sir,' he began, 'public expectation has long marked out the year 1860 as an important epoch in British finance. It has long been well known that in this year, for the first time, we were to receive from a process not of our own creation a very great relief in respect of our annual payment of interest upon the National Debt—a relief amounting to no less a sum than £2,146,000—a relief such as we never have known in time past, and such as, I am afraid, we shall never know in time to come. Besides that relief, other and more recent arrangements have added to the importance of this juncture. A revenue of nearly £12,000,000 a year, levied by duties on tea and sugar, which still retain a portion of the additions made to them on account of the Russian war, is about to lapse absolutely on the 31st of March, unless it shall be renewed by Parliament. The Income Tax Act, from which during the financial year we shall have derived a sum of between £9,000,000 and £10,000,000, is likewise to lapse at the very same time, although an amount not inconsiderable will still remain to be collected in virtue of the law about to expire. And lastly, an event of not less interest than any of these, which has caused public feeling to thrill from one end of the country to the other—I mean the treaty of commerce, which my noble friend the Foreign Minister has just laid on the table—has rendered it a matter of propriety, nay, almost of absolute

necessity, for the Government to request the House to deviate, under the peculiar circumstances of the case, from its usual, its salutary, its constitutional practice of voting the principal charges of the year before they proceed to consider the means of defraying them, and has induced the Government to think they would best fulfil their duty by inviting attention on the earliest possible day to those financial arrangements for the coming year which are materially affected by the treaty with France, and which, though they reach considerably beyond the limits of that treaty, yet, notwithstanding, can only be examined by the House in a satisfactory manner when examined as a whole.'\*

Mr. Gladstone then went on to announce that the financial results of the year—so far, at least, as the receipts were concerned—were eminently satisfactory. The total estimated revenue was £69,460,000; the actual amount produced was not less than £70,578,000. The expenditure had been £68,953,000. Under ordinary circumstances, this amount would have left a surplus of £1,625,000; but there had been additional charges, arising out of the expedition to China, in the army of £900,000, and the navy, £270,000. Then came the effect of the treaty with France, for which there was to be deducted from the customs £640,000. The total was £1,800,000, which would have placed

<sup>\*</sup> A corrected verbatim report of this and other budget speeches appears in the volume—published under Mr. Gladstone's authority—The Financial Statements of 1853, 1860-1863. To which are added a Speech on Tax Bills, 1861, and on Charities, 1863. By the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone.

the revenue on the wrong side of the account; but in a happy moment, Spain—'not under any peculiar pressure from us, but with a high sense of honour and duty'—had paid a debt of £500,000, of which £250,000 would be available at once, so that a small surplus would still be left on the total revenue. With regard to the interest of the debt in the coming year, the estimated charge was £26,200,000, leaving £2,438,000, or more than the annuities which were about to lapse. The Consolidated Fund charges would be £2,000,000; the army, militia, and the charge for China would be £15,800,000; the navy and packet service £13,900,000; or together, £29,700,000, being an increase of more than £3,000,000 on the military estimates of the preceding session. The miscellaneous estimates were £3,500,000; the revenue departments, £4,700,000;—the grand total being £70,100,000. Coming to the estimate of the year in perspective, Mr. Gladstone said that, taking the imports as they then stood, it was:—Customs, £22,700,000; excise, £19,170,000; stamps, £8,000,000; taxes, £3,250,000; income-tax, £2,400,000; with the post-office the total being £60,700,000; thus leaving a deficit of £9,400,000; and this without any provision for £1,000,000 coming due on Exchequer bonds. Even if the existing war duties on tea and sugar should be retained, the deficit would still be £7,300,000. This would require an income-tax of 9d. in the pound, there being no remission of taxation in the trade and commerce of the country; but the £9,400,000 would require an in-

come-tax of 1s. in the pound. He knew that it might with justice be demanded of him, 'What has become of the calculations of 1853?' His answer was, that in that year it was reckoned there would be gained by taxes then imposed between that and the present time a sum of £5,959,000, which was about the sum that the income-tax would have reached at 5d. in the pound in the present year. The succession duty had failed to produce what was expected; surpluses had been stopped by the intervention of war; and there was, moreover, the charge for additional debt incurred by the Russian war, which amounted to £2,920,000. The alteration in the spirit duties, however, had added £2,000,000 to the revenue; and the revenue generally had been so prosperous, that if the expenditure had not rapidly increased the amount calculated in 1853 would have been realised. It was a constantly increasing expenditure which had destroyed the calculations of 1853.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer next demonstrated by elaborate statistics how much richer the country was than in 1842 and 1853. In the former year the annual income of the country was £154,000,000; in 1853 it had risen to £172,000,000; in 1857-8 it stood at £191,000,000; and in 1859-60 at £200,000,000. The increase had occurred in every class in the country, and in the agricultural class most of all. In 1842 the gross expenditure of the country was £68,500,000; in 1853 it was £71,500,000; in 1859-60 it was £87,697,000; these totals, including the local expenditure as well as

that of the State properly so called, showing a gradual but large increase. The comparative growth of wealth and expenditure was therefore wholly unequal, and it showed the course which the country was pursuing—a course with which he was far from being satisfied. But there was a deficit of £9,400,000 to be met. He had shadowed out a budget by which, with an incometax of 1s. in the pound, their object could be achieved, with a relief to the consumers of tea and sugar to the extent of the remaining portions of the war duty; or, there was a more niggardly budget, which would keep up the duties on tea and sugar, yet still leave the country liable to an income-tax of not less than 9d. in the pound. It was his intention to apply in aid of the expenditure of the year a sum of not less than £1,400,000, which was no part of the proposed taxation of the year, but which would be obtained by rendering available another portion of the malt credit, and likewise the credit usually given on hops. heavy income-tax which had been borne would not have been borne as it had been without discontent, but for the strength which the country had derived from the recent commercial legislation, and the confidence of the nation in the integrity and wisdom of Parliament. Slightly modifying this statement as to the absence of discontent, the right hon. gentleman said, 'I speak in general terms. Indeed, I now remember that I myself had, about a fortnight ago, a letter addressed to me, complaining of the monstrous injustice and iniquity of the income-tax, and proposing

that, in consideration thereof, the Chancellor of the Exchequer should be publicly hanged!'

Enforcing the duty of the Government to take further steps in the direction of relieving trade and commerce from imposts in pursuance of the principles of Free Trade (notwithstanding the difficulties which existed), Mr. Gladstone subsequently entered into calculations to show that remissions of taxation had always been accompanied by increase of revenue, consequent on the increase of trade and commerce. He then announced that he did not propose to touch the taxes on tea or sugar, which would be renewed as they then stood for one year. 'I now come,' continued the speaker, 'to the question of the commercial treaty with France. And, sir, I will at once confidently recommend the adoption of the treaty to the committee, as fulfilling and satisfying all the conditions of the most beneficial kind of change in our commercial legislation.' With regard to the points of the treaty, France was to reduce the duties on coal and iron in 1860; on yarn, flax, and hemp early in 1861. On the 1st of October, 1861, the duties would be reduced or prohibition removed from all British articles, so that no duty should be higher than 30 per cent. ad valorem, all the staple manufactures of Britain being included. In three years afterwards the maximum duty was to be 25 per cent. ad valorem. England, on her part, engaged herself immediately and totally to abolish all duty on all manufactured goods from France, to reduce the duty on brandy to 8s. 2d. per gallon, on foreign wine (not merely French) to 3s. per gallon, and in 1861 still further, in reference to the strength of the wine—the lowest duty being 1s. per gallon; the charge on French articles liable to excise duty in England to be the same as the English duty. The treaty was to be in force for ten years. Mr. Gladstone denied the charge of subserviency to France brought against the treaty, and said that he was aware it would be held to bear a political character. He thus eloquently enlarged upon the real friendship which the treaty would inaugurate between the two countries:—

'I do not forget, sir, that there was once a time when close relations of amity were established between the Governments of England and France. It was in the reign of the later Stuarts; it marks a dark spot in our annals: but the spot is dark because the union was an union formed in a spirit of domineering ambition on the one side, and of base and most corrupt servility on the other. But that, sir, was not an union of the nations; it was an union of the Governments. This is not to be an union of the Governments apart from the countries; it is, as we hope, to be an union of the nations themselves; and I confidently say again, as I have already ventured to say in this House, that there never can be any union between the nations of England and France except an union beneficial to the world, because directly that either the one or the other of the two begins to harbour schemes of selfish aggrandisement, that moment the jealousy of its neighbour will be aroused, and will beget a powerful reaction; and the very fact of their being in harmony will of itself at all times be the most conclusive proof that neither of them can be engaged in meditating anything which is dangerous to Europe.'

Mr. Gladstone next combated the objection that a commercial treaty is an abandonment of the principles of Free Trade. That would be so in one sense if it involved the recognition of exclusive privileges. This particular treaty was an abandonment of the principle

of Protection. He was not aware of any entangling engagement which it contained; and it certainly contained no exclusive privilege. 'It is a means, I hope,' the right hon. gentleman added, 'tolerably complete and efficacious, of sweeping from the statute-book the chief among such relics of that miscalled system of Protection as still remain upon it. The fact is—and you will presently see how truly it is so-that our old friend Protection, who used formerly to dwell in the palaces and the high places of the land, and who was dislodged from them some ten or fifteen years ago, has, since that period, still found pretty comfortable shelter and good living in holes and corners; and you are now invited, if you will have the goodness to concur in the operation, to see whether you cannot likewise eject him from those holes and corners.' Dwelling upon the effects of the treaty, Mr. Gladstone said that the reduction on wine would cause a loss in revenue of £515,000, on brandy of £225,000, on manufactured goods of £440,000—making a total of £1,180,000. He maintained that these were not revenue duties, but were all protective duties. Statistics were quoted to show that it was desirable to make such a bargain with France as would allow of the interchange of manufactures and commodities, which was already important, and which must largely increase when France was induced to break down her prohibitory system. That which had been done would have been good for this country if France had done nothing; it was better for us in proportion as France

did something. One result of the high duty on French brandy, for example, was the manufacture of an unhappy production in the shape of a spirit called British brandy. As to wine, it was said to be the rich man's luxury, and tea the poor man's luxury; but in 1760 tea was the rich man's luxury, and sold at 20s. a pound; and by reducing the duty you might make wine the poor man's luxury. In fact, the existing duties were not merely protective but prohibitory, and there was a pressure with regard to that article which, apart from any treaty with France, would compel a dealing with the wine duties. The consumption of foreign wines in this country had greatly increased by at least 168,000 gallons in the last year; and concurrent with that there had been a large consumption of colonial wines and even of British wines. showed a great demand for wine, and there was reason to believe that a greater production of wines, fitted for the English market and middle and lower classes of this country, could be effected. The idea that under no possible circumstances could Englishmen like French wines, ought to be exploded, there being, in fact, a great taste in England for those wines; but it was stifled by prohibitory duties, which generated a mass of evils in the shape of fraud and adulteration. The alteration in the tariff with France would tend greatly to facilitate personal intercourse with the Continent, by enabling the Customs authorities to withdraw the greater part of the annoying restraints now existing on the rapid transit of passengers and their baggage.

No passage of Mr. Gladstone's speech was more warmly applauded than the following, with especially glowing and generous tribute to Mr. Cobden:—'Sir, I cannot pass from the subject of the French Treaty without paying a tribute of respect to two persons, at least, who have been the main authors I am bound to bear this witness, at any rate, with regard to the Emperor of the French: that he has given the most unequivocal proofs of sincerity and earnestness in the progress of this great work, a work which he has prosecuted with clear-sighted resolution, not, doubtless, for British purposes, but in the spirit of enlightened patriotism, with a view to commercial reforms at home, and to the advantage and happiness of his own people by means of those reforms. With regard to Mr. Cobden, speaking as I do at a time when every angry passion has passed away, I cannot help expressing our obligations to him for the labour he has, at no small personal sacrifice, bestowed upon a measure which he—not the least among the apostles of Free Trade—believes to be one of the most memorable triumphs Free Trade has ever achieved. Rare is the privilege of any man who, having fourteen years ago rendered to his country one signal and splendid service, now again, within the same brief span of life, decorated neither by rank nor title, bearing no mark to distinguish him from the people whom he loves, has been permitted again to perform a great and memorable service to his Sovereign and to his country.'

When the cheers evoked by this eulogium—alike honourable to the speaker and its subject—had subsided, Mr. Gladstone proceeded to unfold his supplemental measure of customs reform. It was proposed to reduce customs duties, in addition to those named, to the extent of £910,100, but to supply that sum by other impositions on trade. The duties to be abolished were those on butter, tallow, cheese, oranges and lemons, eggs, &c., which amounted to £380,000 a year. There were to be reductions of duties on timber, currants, raisins, figs, and hops, making together £658,000; the total reduction being £1,039,000. An extension of penny taxation would be resorted to. in order to compensate this loss, and by this means £982,000 would be restored to the general revenue. The loss to the revenue by the French Treaty and reduction of duties he estimated at £2,146,000, but of this sum half was redeemed by the imposts specified.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer next announced that he proposed the abolition of the excise duty on paper. Some of the reasons advanced for this step were not very dissimilar to those which, as we have already seen, he once adduced for the retention of the duty; but the press had shown a capacity to wield its enormous power with (speaking, of course, generally) justice and purity; and Mr. Gladstone now augured the happiest results from a spread of cheap literature. Besides, not only had the duty been condemned by the Commons' House of Parliament, but it was a bad and untenable one. It operated most oppressively on

the common sorts of paper, and tended to restrict the circulation of cheap literature. The materials which the duty affected were of boundless scope, as everything fibrous could be converted into paper, which was an article extensively used in sixty-nine trades. The duty on paper had closed all the small mills, and the manufacture of paper was monopolised by two or three makers. By taking off the duty it was contended that the House would promote rural labour, and so produce a beneficial effect on the poor rates of the various districts. Mr. Gladstone mentioned in proof of this the case of a gentleman, 'second to no man in England for his enterprise,'\* who a few years before had established a paper manufactory at Rickmansworth, with the result that within three or four years after its establishment the poor rates were diminished in that parish by one-half. This was an argument of a nature to be readily appreciated and understood. He therefore proposed that the paper duty should be abolished from the 1st of July, allowing the usual drawback to those who had stocks on hand. It was also proposed to abolish the impressed stamp on newspapers. With this announcement he

<sup>\*</sup> Mr. Herbert Ingram, then M.P. for Boston, and proprietor of the Illustrated London News. Besides its effects upon the newspaper branch of literature, it would be impossible to exaggerate the beneficial results of the repeal of the paper duty upon literature generally, through the operations of the great publishing houses of the metropolis; and amongst these the author cannot reconcile himself to omit mention of the firm through whose instrumentality this work is presented to the public. Did space permit, startling statistics could be adduced in proof of the wisdom and foresight of Mr. Gladstone's policy.

had reached the end of the remissions it was proposed to make.

It was still necessary, however, to refer to some articles which were connected with the departments of excise and taxes. With regard to hops, the system of credits would be altered. It was proposed to remove the prohibition on malt, and to fix a duty on it of 3s. a bushel. The alterations and reductions he had proposed would give a total relief to the consumer of £3,931,000, and cause a net loss to the revenue of £2,108,000, a sum about equivalent to the amount falling in from the cessation of Government annuities that year. The number of articles which would remain on the customs' tariff would be forty-eight, and next year forty-four-spirits, tea, tobacco, sugar, wine, coffee, corn, currants, and timber being the principal -only fifteen of the whole being retained for purposes of revenue. He expected to obtain £1,400,000 by taking up the malt and hop duties within the year. Mr. Gladstone then came to the last of the chief points of his budget. There was no liberty of choice but to retain the income-tax. He consequently proposed that, in order to supply the remainder of the deficit of £9,400,000, the tax should be renewed at the rate of 10d. in the pound on incomes of upwards of £150 a year, and at 7d. below that sum; the tax to be taken for one year only, three-quarters of the year's rate to be collected within the year, which would give a sum of £8,472,000. This would bring the total income up to £70,564,000. The total charge was £70,100,000;

and thus they remained with an apparent or estimated surplus of £464,000. The Chancellor of the Exchequer concluded this important and elaborate financial statement with the following peroration:—

'Our proposals involve a great reform in our tariff; they involve a large remission of taxation, and last of all, though not least, they include that commercial treaty with France which, though we have to apprehend that objections in some quarters will be taken to it, we confidently recommend, not only on moral, and social, and political, but also, and with equal confidence, on economical and fiscal grounds. . . . . There were times, now long by, when Sovereigns made progress through the land, and when, at the proclamation of their heralds, they caused to be scattered whole showers of coin among the people who thronged upon their steps. That may have been a goodly spectacle; but it is also a goodly spectacle, and one adapted to the altered spirit and circumstances of our times, when our Sovereign is enabled, through the wisdom of her great Council, assembled in Parliament around her, again to scatter blessings among her subjects by means of wise and prudent laws; of laws which do not sap in any respect the foundations of duty or of manhood, but which strike away the shackles from the arm of industry, which give new incentives and new rewards to toil, and which win more and more for the Throne and for the institutions of the country the gratitude, the confidence, and the love of an united people. Let me say even to those who are anxious, and justly anxious, on the subject of our national defences, that that which stirs the flame of patriotism in men, that which binds them in one heart and soul, that which gives them increased confidence in their rulers, that which makes them feel and know that they are treated with justice, and that we who represent them are labouring incessantly and earnestly for their good—is in itself no small, no feeble, and no transitory part of national defence. We recommend these proposals to your impartial and searching inquiry. We do not presume, indeed, to make a claim on your acknowledgments; but neither do we desire to draw on your unrequited confidence, nor to lodge an appeal to your compassion. We ask for nothing more than your dispassionate judgment, and for nothing less; we know that our plan will receive that justice at your hands; and we confidently anticipate on its behalf the approval alike of the Parliament and the nation.'

This speech occupied four hours in delivery, but it was listened to without the least sign of weariness—a

result to which the character of the speaker's oratory in no small degree contributed. It was one of the peculiarities of Mr. Gladstone's budget-addresses that they roused curiosity in the outset, and, being delivered in a musical, sonorous, and perfectly modulated voice, kept the listeners interested to the very close. This financial statement of 1860 was 'admirably arranged for the purpose of awaking and keeping attention, piquing and teasing curiosity, and sustaining desire to hear from the first sentence to the last. It was not a speech, it was an oration in the form of a great State paper made eloquent, in which there was a proper restraint over the crowding ideas, the most exact accuracy in the sentences, and even in the very words chosen; the most perfect balancing of parts, and, more than all, there were no errors of omission; nothing was put wrongly, and nothing was overlooked.' With a House crowded in every corner, with the strain upon his own mental faculties, and the great physical tax implied in the management of the voice, and the necessity for remaining upon his feet during this long period, 'the observed of all observers,' Mr. Gladstone took all as quietly, we are told, as if he had just risen to address a few observations to Mr. Speaker. deed, it was laughingly said that he could readily address the House for a whole week, and on the Friday evening have taken a new departure, beginning with the observation, 'After these preliminary remarks, I will now proceed to deal with the subject matter of my financial plan.'

The Chancellor of the Exchequer's great, scheme was not to pass unchallenged. He had brought forward proposals conceived in a large and liberal spiritproposals in which neither the rich nor the poor were forgotten; proposals which provided for a remission of taxes upon the simple necessaries of life, and which gave a large stimulus to trade and industry. But no budget yet produced ever gave satisfaction, in all points, to every class of the community: the shoe necessarily pinches somewhere. The budget of 1860 accordingly had its opponents. The shipowners condemned it because it failed to place the shipping of both countries on the same footing; the licensed victuallers organised a movement for opposing the licenses for eating-houses; and several minor details were objected to; but on the whole the scheme was favourably viewed by the country. The Manchester Chamber of Commerce, followed by other Chambers, petitioned the House of Commons to pass the budget with all convenient speed; and at a meeting of the Lancashire Reformers' Union, Mr. Bright warmly expressed his approval of it.

The Opposition made one strong formal attack upon the budget and the treaty. Mr. Du Cane, who had given notice of a motion impeaching the principle of the budget, was induced to postpone it; and Mr. Disraeli brought forward a resolution to the effect that 'this House does not think fit to go into committee on the Customs Acts, with a view to the reduction or repeal of the duties referred to in the treaty of

commerce between her Majesty and the Emperor of the French, until it shall have considered and assented to the engagements in that treaty.' The right hon. gentleman attacked the treaty, attacked the Government, and attacked Mr. Cobden. 'The treaty bears marks,' he said, 'of the idiosyncrasy of the negotiator.'

Mr. Gladstone retorted that he did not know what the resolution meant, and he did not believe Mr. Disraeli himself knew what it meant. He ridiculed the latter's attributing to the Government a course which had caused the Queen to commit an illegal act, and to make an attack on the constitutional privileges of the House of Commons. He repudiated the charitable protection of inadvertence offered to him by the leader of the Opposition, and rejected his proposition. The precedent of Mr. Pitt had been followed in every respect, and Mr. Disraeli was wrong both in his facts and his arguments with regard to the course taken by Mr. Pitt in 1786. At the conclusion of the debate there appeared—For Mr. Disraeli's motion, 230; against, 293-majority for the Government, 63. Mr. Gladstone was exceedingly buoyant, and even triumphant, in his speech in answer to Mr. Disraeli; he had the advantage of a strong case. One of the journals at the time remarked that the Chancellor of the Exchequer 'won his Magenta gallantly, and with extraordinary damage to the enemy. The battle has been renewed, and is raging while we write, but the Opposition army is dispirited and charges languidly, and all seems tending towards a Ministerial Solferino. Mr. Gladstone distinguished himself in the first engagement by a feat of arms of the most brilliant character, and none of his own Homeric heroes could have more terribly "poured in thunder on the foe." Dropping martial metaphor, it may be said that the best debater in the House of Commons delivered, in answer to Mr. Disraeli—no unworthy antagonist—a speech in which the lucidity of the argument was worthy of the powerful declamation of the orator. When Mr. Gladstone addresses himself in his best manner to his work, as he did upon the occasion in question, the House of Commons is justly proud of its illustrious member. Sometimes, like Burke,

"He goes on refining,

And thinks of convincing while they think of dining"

(or rather of dividing, for he seldom throws himself away upon the *Impransi*); but there was no such waste of thought upon this occasion, when he closed with his adversary like a man who meant mischief;—and he did it. Mr. Disraeli knows best whether it was wise to get his forces so exceedingly well beaten at the beginning of the financial campaign; but that is his affair and Prince Rupert's.'

Mr. Du Cane subsequently brought forward his motion, affirming the inexpediency of any remission of duties, and the disappointment which would be caused throughout the country by the reimposition of the income-tax at an unnecessarily high rate. The debate was continued through three sittings, and towards its close Mr. Gladstone replied to the principal arguments

urged against his financial scheme. With considerable power and vivacity, he vindicated the policy of the treaty with France, which he considered would do more to unite the two countries in the bonds of amity than any measure that could be adopted. The division showed an increased majority for the Government, the numbers being—For Mr. Du Cane's amendment, 223; against, 339—majority for the Ministry, 116. A futile attempt was afterwards made to retain the paper duty.

The budget, nevertheless, was not safe yet. Several of its leading provisions were repeatedly attacked—as for example the remission of wine duties and the reimposition of the income-tax—and on the order for the third reading of the Paper Duty Repeal Bill, Sir S. Northcote moved that the existing state of the finances of the country rendered it undesirable to proceed further with the measure. The Opposition mustered strongly, but the supporters of the Government, probably thinking the bill safe, did not attend to vote in large numbers, the figures being—For the third reading, 219; against, 210.

As this budget of 1860 is the most important with which Mr. Gladstone's name is associated, some reference must be made to the opposition which arose out of doors, to one of its most important provisions, before the scheme finally passed the House of Commons. The turning-point of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's success in the matter of the paper duty was the provision to repeal not only the paper duty at

home, but the duty upon foreign paper coming in; which was the provision practically settling the matter, inasmuch as the large paper-makers at home could not compete with the foreign manufacturers, who would not allow their rags to come into the English market. This provision, whilst it served to turn the flank of the opposition, did not immediately disarm the hostility of the small section of protective paper-makers in this country, and a paper warfare ensued.\* The real state of the case, however, was well exposed in one of the daily journals. The Government, in abolishing the excise duty on paper, proposed (as above stated) also to abolish the import duty of  $1\frac{1}{2}d$ . per lb. hitherto charged on paper brought into the United Kingdom from abroad, and to establish, so far as England was concerned, entire free trade in that commodity. The effect of this undoubtedly was to expose our own paper-manufacturers to foreign But paper of the highest class had competition. hitherto been made chiefly from rags, which thus became an important article of commerce; and the French Government, while doing away with the prohibition which had so far prevented our getting any rags at all from France, intended to levy a tax on their exportation. The effect of this would be to make rags cheaper in France than in England, and conse-

<sup>\*</sup>The literature upon this subject was most voluminous; but the arguments of the Protectionist minority were fully and effectively answered by some of the leading publishers, as well as by the daily journals, which almost unanimously supported the budget propositions.

quently the manufacture of paper cheaper; and as French paper was to be admitted without duty, our manufacturers complained that they would be exposed to an unfair and ruinous competition. Such was the nature of the arguments advanced by the protectionist section on this question. In reply, it was asked, looking at the question from a consumer's point of view, whether we were to allow French blunders of a protective character to control British legislation? Mr. Gladstone was asked to lay an import duty on French paper, in order to make English paper dearer than it otherwise would be, and enable English paper-makers to get a higher price than they would have to pay if we allowed the free importation of paper from France. 'This would have been an abandonment of the principles of Free Trade, of which we had hitherto boasted. In fact, as the French Treaty reserved to us the right of laying an import duty on French goods sufficient to counterbalance any excise duty which might be levied in England on the same articles, consequently the abolition of the excise duty on paper required us to admit French paper duty free. If the counter-proposition had been adopted, it would have upset the treaty. It was merely a desire on the part of the few leading paper-makers who were foremost in the powerful phalanx of resistance to be saved from the proposed effects of foreign competition. Immediately Mr. Gladstone perceived the full bearing of the question, and the effect his measure must produce on this opposition, he resolved upon pushing

forward his comprehensive propositions; and we have seen that, after considerable opposition, his financial scheme passed the Commons in its entirety.

But the question now arose, What will the Lords do; will they consent to the repeal of the paper duty? Unfortunately, they resolved upon the rejection of the measure. Lord Monteagle gave notice of a hostile motion to this effect, and Lord Derby stated his intention of supporting it. Immediately upon the announcement of this resolution by the Conservative chief, an influential deputation waited upon his lordship to procure a reconsideration of his decision. Lord Derby himself was surprised at the numbers and importance of those forming the deputation, which included representatives of literature and journalism, as well as of some of the leading publishing houses in the metropolis.\* A memorial, adopted at a public meeting held at St. Martin's Hall, was presented to his lordship, protesting against the course he had intimated it to be his intention to take. In reply, Lord Derby made a remarkable statement. He said that in 1858 and 1859, as he had been reminded, he had expressed his own opinion that the tax was objectionable, and that it was desirable it should be repealed as soon as the state of the revenue would permit it;

<sup>\*</sup> It may be stated that amongst those comprising the deputation were Mr. Ewart, M.P., Mr. Ingram, M.P., Mr. Crawford, M.P., and Mr. Serjeant Parry. The last-named gentleman presented the memorial, adding some remarks, and the case for repeal was forcibly and exhaustively placed before Lord Derby by Mr. Ewart, Mr. G. William Petter, Mr. F. Evans, and some other speakers.

and the question between himself and the deputation was whether the present state of the revenue and the financial prospects of the country admitted of the Legislature taking a step which he would assume, for the sake of argument, to be beneficial in itself.

This admission was a virtual condemnation of Lord Derby's own course; for Mr. Gladstone, as the administrator of the national finances, was certainly best able to judge whether those finances would stand the strain of repeal. Lord Derby made the further acknowledgment that not only must the House of Commons originate all taxes that are to be imposed, but that the House of Lords had no right to modify a tax in the slightest degree. The proposed rejection of the Paper Duty scheme was therefore diametrically opposed to Parliamentary usage and practice, and to the rights of the people. Lord Derby could not defend the tax on its intrinsic merits; and, moreover, while its abolition was a positive and undeniable good, its retention under any circumstances could not be very long.

Before the division in the Upper House was taken, Mr. Bright attended a great public meeting held to protest against 'the usurpation, proposed by Lord Derby to the House of Lords, in the retention of the tax upon paper, independent of the House of Commons and the Crown.' The hon. member for Birmingham denied the right of the House of Lords to supersede a vote of the Commons, who had the right—the sole right—of voting money for the service of the Crown. The step was an attack upon

liberty, upon the dignity and rights of the House of Commons. If the Government tamely submitted they would lose the confidence of the country. 'And who would come in?—the old thing over again: Derby in one House, Disraeli in the other—men who appear to have no principle. Wherever you see them travelling, if you study with the minutest investigation their political Bradshaw, you will find that every line converges to one point, which is Downing Street.' The constitutional question he declared to be worth a hundred times the excise duty upon paper.

When the bill came on for second reading in the House of Lords, notwithstanding, evil counsels prevailed, and it was rejected by the large majority of 89. Mr. Gladstone was now face to face with the gravest constitutional crisis in his career—not excepting, perhaps, that which subsequently arose respecting the abolition of Purchase in the Army.

It was held by many—and those unquestionably the great majority in the country—that the rejection of the bill by the Lords, if sustained, would establish a marked precedent for the future. The minority, again, looking at the question in what they deemed to be a practical light, regarded the decision of the Lords as wise and prudent. Eventually, the House of Commons appointed a committee to draw up a report on historical precedents in the matter; and on the 5th of July Lord Palmerston moved the following resolutions:—
'1. That the right of granting aids and supplies to the Crown is in the Commons alone, as an essential

part of their constitution, and the limitation of a such grants as to matter, manner, measure, and tin is only in them. 2. That although the Lords have exercised the power of rejecting bills of several de scriptions relating to taxation by negativing the whole yet the exercise of that power by them has not bee frequent, and is justly regarded by this House wit peculiar jealousy as affecting the right of the Common to grant the supplies, and to provide the Ways an Means for the service of the year. 3. That to guar for the future against an undue exercise of that power by the Lords, and to secure to the Commons the rightful control over taxation and supply, this House has in its own hands the power so to impose and rem taxes and to frame bills of supply, that the right of the Commons as to the matter, manner, measure, an time may be maintained inviolate.' His lordship sai that as the House of Lords had been encouraged b the diminution of the majority in the Lower Housewhich had fallen from 53 on the second to 9 on the third reading—it would be better for the Common to satisfy themselves with a mere declaration of the constitutional privileges. The resolutions were carried

Mr. Gladstone, in speaking upon them, said the while the resolutions did all that language could do to defend the honour of that House, he was prepared to go further, and to reserve to himself the right of acting. The precedents quoted had not touched in the slightest degree the case under consideration; for them was a great difference between the House of Lord

advising an alteration in a money bill and rejecting the repeal of a tax. The House of Commons had declared that they could spare from the revenue of the country £1,125,000 of the taxation, and having an option between the tea and the paper duties as to which they should remit, they chose that which they believed would prove more beneficial to the country, though, perhaps, not the most popular. The result had been that the House of Lords had chosen to assume to themselves the power of dictating to the House of Commons, and of saying that the country could not spare such a remission of taxation. Mr. Gladstone maintained that the House had the undoubted right to select the manner in which the people should be taxed, and they were bound to preserve intact that precious deposit. He reserved to himself the privilege of submitting such practical measures as would give effect to the resolutions.

In the closing days of the session this important financial question was once more discussed in a House which (owing to the strenuous exertions of the Whips) numbered exactly five hundred members, including the Speaker. This was an unusual spectacle in a session already almost moribund. Mr. Gladstone moved his resolutions for the reduction of the duty on foreign paper. The question, he said, was great in connection with important commercial principles, and obligations of honour and policy, as it related to a contract with France. Reducing the customs duty on paper to that of the excise was clearly within the

sense and meaning of the treaty with France. On the ground of humanity towards the papermakers, it would be desirable to settle the question then. The obligation of the treaty was, in the opinion of the law officers of the Crown, undoubted; and in that opinion the legal authorities of France concurred. The question was also one of policy, and a touchstone was now to be applied to old and new friends of Free Trade, and that was, this very last article which claimed protection. He could not doubt that the sense of honour of the House, as well as its sense of policy, would dictate to them the acceptance of a resolution which for the last time would deal with Protection.

The first resolution was carried by a majority of 33, the numbers being—For the resolution, 266; against, 233. The cheers which followed the announcement of these figures were loud and prolonged; and when Mr. Gladstone rose to read his second resolution he was kept standing for five or six minutes, in consequence of the continued applause from the Liberal benches. With the passing of these resolutions, the constitutional question, which had given rise to so much acrimonious debate, remained in abeyance for the time, but only to be re-opened in the following session.\*

In the course of this session Mr. Gladstone addressed the House on the subject of Lord John Russell's Reform

<sup>\*</sup> It was pointed out by Lord Brougham and others how great would have been the injustice and loss inflicted upon the whole body of publishers if the tax had been retained. Engagements entailing enormous expenditure had been entered upon, on the faith of the determination of the House of Commons—expressed in the outset of the struggle—to abolish the tax.

Bill. This measure proposed to add to the £10 occupation franchise in counties a security that would make it a bonâ fide franchise, and to introduce a £6 franchise in towns, which would add (said Mr. Disraeli) about 200,000 to the borough constituency. There were also some redistribution changes in the bill, and the payment of poor rates only was to be the condition of the vote. In the debate on the second reading, Mr. Gladstone vindicated the conduct and consistency of the introducer of the bill, as well as of the Government, upon the Reform question. bill was brought forward in obedience to frequent pledges, and after these pledges and the expectations which had been raised, he must warn hon. gentlemen opposite of the danger of further and unnecessary delay. He ridiculed the fears of those who thought that the proposed franchise would have the effect of deteriorating the constituencies of the country; and contended, on the contrary, that the class of voters created by the bill were, by their position and intelligence, fully as capable of exercising the franchise as independently as many of the shopkeeping electors in our boroughs. The apprehensions of the £6 electors becoming so numerous as to swamp the representation of property and station in that House were, he maintained, utterly unfounded and delusive.

The bill was read a second time without a division; but finding it impossible to carry it through both Houses this session, Lord J. Russell withdrew it.

It is refreshing, for the moment, to turn from the

arena of politics, and to regard Mr. Gladstone in another capacity, and one in which he has appeared on several occasions during his lengthened career. On the 16th of April, 1860, he was installed as Lord Rector of the University of Edinburgh, receiving previous to the installation the degree of LL.D. Having been formally introduced as Rector of the University by Sir David Brewster, Mr. Gladstone delivered the customary address. The right hon. gentleman began by stating that he intended to speak to the assembled students of the work of the University as a great organ of preparation for after life, with the view of assisting them in arming themselves for the efforts and trials of their career. Every generation of men, it was said, as it traversed the vale of life, laboured under that which succeeded it, and accumulated new treasures for the race. No small part of that treasure was stored, and no small part of that part was performed by universities, which had been entitled to rank among the greater lights and glories of Christendom. Mr. Gladstone then described the work of the University as covering the whole field of knowledge, human and divine; the whole field of nature; the whole field of time, in binding together successive generations as they passed in the prosecution of their common destiny; aiding each to sow its proper seed and to reap its proper harvest from what had been sown before; storing up into its own treasure-house the spoils of every new venture in the domain of mental enterprise; and ever binding the

present to pay over to the future, at least, an acknowledgment of the debt it owed to the past. In the olden history of the universities, they were to knowledge and mental freedom what the castle was to the feudal baron—what the guild was to the infant middle classes. The universities were a great mediating power between the high and the low—the old and the new; between the speculative and the active; between authority and freedom. In countries which enjoyed political liberty, the universities were usually firm supporters of the established order of things; but in countries under absolute government they acquired a bias towards innovation. After some remarks on the proper work of universities, Mr. Gladstone noticed the difficulties attending the question, how far endowments for education were desirable, urging upon students and teachers the duty of bestirring themselves in their own persons to refute the charge that endowments of universities gravitated towards torpor as their natural termination. The new Lord Rector finally impressed upon the students the importance of the acquisition of those particular forms of knowledge which would be directly serviceable to them in their several professions, and the value of the study of ancient literature, as affording the most effective intellectual training.

Thus closed an address whose special characteristic was its great practical value.

## CHAPTER XV.

## FINANCIAL STATEMENTS OF 1861-63.

The Results of Free Trade—England's Foreign Relations—Mr. Gladstone's Post Office Savings Bank Bill—Church Rates—The Affairs of Italy—Speech of Mr. Gladstone—The Budget of 1861—Effects of the French Treaty—Character of the Financial Statement—The Paper Duty—Its Repeal opposed—Attacks on the Chancellor of the Exchequer—The Bill passed—Mr. Gladstone's Mission to the Ionian Islands—Financial Measures of 1862—Their Scope and Character—Another Debate on the Affairs of Italy—Mr. Gladstone's Reply to Sir George Bowyer—The Confederate States of America—Indiscreet Utterance of the Chancellor of the Exchequer—Presentation to Mr. Charles Kean—The Budget of 1863—Application of the Surplus—Proposed Taxation of Charities—The Scheme abandoned—Debate on the Income-tax—Dissenters' Burials Bill—The International Exhibition Building.

The sagacity of the statesmen who, through evil report and good report, had remained the steadfast friends of the principles of Free Trade, was strongly attested in the year 1861. The harvest of the preceding year had failed, and the most lugubrious vaticinations of poverty and distress were indulged in by those who had alike opposed the great measure of Sir Robert Peel and the Commercial Treaty with France. These prognostications were defeated, and England discovered that Free Trade, which had been described as the parent of innumerable evils, was her saviour in the period of national crisis. The removal of the restrictions which had hitherto impeded the free interchange of commodities with other countries, now operated in a

most salutary manner, when the country was driven, by her enlarged necessities, to the resources of a foreign supply; and Free Trade exercised a healthful influence in many other respects upon English industry. Under other circumstances, the scarcity of the harvest, and the fetters upon trade, would have seriously crippled the country at this juncture; but the working classes especially now experienced the most beneficial results from the removal, by the Legislature, of a pressure that must long otherwise have retarded the internal progress of the Empire.

When the session opened, the relations of England with foreign Powers were friendly and satisfactory; and though events of great importance were transpiring in Italy, it was hoped that the moderation of the Powers of Europe would prevent any interruption of the general peace. The Speech from the Throne announced that the operations of the allied forces in China had been attended with complete success. With the occupation of Pekin, an honourable and a satisfactory settlement of all the matters in dispute had been procured. Serious differences had arisen amongst the States of the North American Union, but it was hoped that these differences might still prove susceptible of a pacific adjustment.

In the House of Lords, the Earl of Derby strongly condemned the policy of the Government with regard to France and Italy—a policy which he described as placing on the shoulders of the people 'an amount of taxation absolutely unprecedented in time of peace,

and only made more intolerable by the financial freaks of the Chancellor of the Exchequer.' To this attack upon Mr. Gladstone, the records of the session of 1861 furnish the best of all possible answers—an eminently practical one. The Chancellor of the Exthequer again proceeded with his legislation on behalf of the people, and only three days after the speech of Lord Derby in the Upper House, he brought forward in the House of Commons the preliminary resolutions on which he designed to found his new Post Office Savings Bank Bill. The object of this measure was to give increased facilities for the deposit of small savings to those who now only possessed imperfect ones, through the medium of the savings-banks. Whereas, up to that time, the savings-banks could only afford limited accommodation for small depositors, there being only 600 in England and Wales-which opened only on two days in the week—the post-offices, of which he proposed now to avail himself, numbered 2,000 or 3,000, and were open every day in the week, and for ten hours each day. The plan would be worked through the Postmaster-General, and the functions of the commissioners would be simply to receive the deposits. The Government proposed to offer the working classes £2 10s. per cent. interest on their deposits, without any expense to the public. The system was intended to be self-supporting. There was nothing in the project to give it the character of a national bank. Mr. Gladstone then moved a resolution to provide for the payment out of the Consolidated Fund of any deficiency which might arise from the establishment of Post-office savings-banks. It would be impossible to over-estimate the advantages which have accrued to certain classes of the community from the legislation thus initiated.

Taking the most important occasions upon which Mr. Gladstone addressed the House during this session in their natural order, we find that, before the close of February, he took part in the discussion on the vexed question of Church rates. Sir John Trelawny had once more introduced his Church Rates Abolition Bill, and on a proposition to defer the bill for six months, or virtually to reject it, the Chancellor of the Exchequer said there was a growing persuasion that it would be for the credit of the Legislature to bring this contentious matter to an end. He did not regard the present bill as one calculated to effect a settlement. The people of England were not prepared to part with the union of Church and State, which was one of the avowed objects of the abolition of Church rates. Abolish Church rates, and the support of the fabric of the Church in the rural districts would be at an end. Dissenters in the main were congregated in the populous parishes, and the offer was made to them to exempt themselves from the rate if they pleased; but they did not please. Accepting Church rates as the means of providing religious worship for the great majority of the poor, were they to be abolished for the sake of a minority who declared they had a grievance from which they would not accept exemption?

Mr. Gladstone concluded by suggesting that an arrangement might be made to accept the power of a majority of a parish to reject or agree to Church rates as a right, at the same time allowing a parish also to tax itself by the will of the majority. He should deeply regret if no agreement could be arrived at; but he thought that the House of Lords, in rejecting these bills from time to time, occupied a strong, and perhaps impregnable position, and he felt it his bounden duty to vote against the second reading of the bill then before the House.

Mr. Bright complained that in effect Mr. Gladstone's proposition was no more than what the existing law amounted to, viz., that where you could not get Church rates you were to let them alone, and where a majority was in favour of them they were to prevail. The bill was carried by 281 to 266. In the majority were Lords Palmerston and Russell, and other members of the Government, but Mr. Gladstone voted in the minority.

The debates which arose in both Houses on the progress of events in Italy demand some notice. The cause of the ex-King of Naples had certain defenders in England, who likewise scouted the notion of a united Italy. Victor Emmanuel was strongly condemned for supporting Garibaldi in Sicily, and approving the invasion of Naples. Mr. Roebuck predicted that if Garibaldi attempted to do in Venetia what he had done in Sicily and Naples, he would be hanged within a week. In the House of Commons, upon the motion for going into committee of Supply on the 4th of March,

Mr. Pope Hennessy rose to call attention to the 'active interference of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in promoting Piedmontese policy,' and to the effect of that policy in increasing the national burdens in Piedmont, in the decline of its trade and commerce, the waste of the population in predatory war, and the consequent decay of agriculture. The speaker contrasted this state of things with the alleged flourishing condition of the Papal dominions in these several respects.

Mr. Hennessy's resolution gave rise to the most exciting debate of the session. Mr. Layard maintained that the policy of her Majesty's Government in regard to the affairs of Italy was in accordance with the sentiments of the large mass of the English people. He entirely sympathised with the Italian people. George Bowyer took the opposite view, alleging that by our support of the ambitious designs of the Emperor of the French we were paralysing all our European Allies. The Government policy had destroyed that prestige of honour and justice which used to attend the British flag. That flag now inspired distrust and apprehension in the minds of sovereigns and nations, and encouraged none but the revolutionary party in Europe, who were the unprincipled tools of the unbounded ambition of the French Emperor.

These speeches drew forth some impassioned replies on the second night of the debate. The eloquence of Sir Robert Peel and Mr. Gladstone especially roused the feelings of the majority of the House to a high pitch of enthusiasm. The picture of Venice drawn by the former The state of the s

was very graphic. 'Venice,' he said, 'is not Austrian it is certainly Italian; but it is trampled under foot be Austria, and held in subjection by 10,000 bayonets, be a race foreign to Italy in language, sympathies, and feelings. Do not tell me that this state of things callast. Venice may be trodden down and ground into the dust, but they cannot destroy her nature, nor change he from what she is. Venice is Italian!

"States fall, arts fade, but Nature doth not die, Nor yet forget how Venice once was dear, The pleasant place of all festivity, The revel of the earth, the masque of Italy!"

That is what Venice was. What is she now? See he "in her voiceless woe;" see her palaces crumbling in ruin!'

But the most crushing retort to Sir George Bowye and his friends came from the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He began his speech by saying that if the debate had been confined to criticisms of the King of Sardinia, or if it concerned only the policy of the English Foreign Minister, he should have remaine silent, because that policy was one which commande approval far beyond the limits of party connection, far beyond the walls of that House, far beyond class of interest. He believed it to be stamped with approvath throughout the body of the people of England, from the greatest to the least. But Sir George Bowyer and Mr. Hennessy had extended the subject of debate, and raised a great issue. They had called upon the House to lament the foreign policy of the Government, which

they alleged was founded on injustice, and could not prosper; and they also said that the cause which we favoured in Italy was the persecution of righteous governments. The member for Dundalk had asserted that a revolution which the people of England looked upon with wonder was the result of a wicked conspiracy, carried on by an unprincipled king and a cunning Minister; and that the people of Naples, governed by benignant laws wisely administered, were devoted to their sovereign. Mr. Gladstone then went on to show how the Constitution of Naples had been trodden under foot, and detailed the melancholy history of the sufferings of the people since the late king had so shamelessly set aside and violated the constitution he had sworn to maintain. Referring to 'that miserable monarch' Francis II., and the courage he was said to have manifested during the siege of Gaeta, the right hon. gentleman remarked, 'It is all very well to claim consideration for him on account of his courage; but I confess I feel much more admiration for the courage of the hon. member for Dundalk (Sir G. Bowyer) and the hon. member for King's County (Mr. Pope Hennessy); for I think I would rather live in a stout and well-built casemate listening to the whizzing of bullets and the bursting of shells, than come before a free assembly to vindicate'—here Mr. Gladstone was interrupted by the loud cheering of members, and for some time he was unable to complete When allowed to proceed, he added, the sentence. 'than to vindicate such a cause as that which those hon. gentlemen have espoused.' Francis II. had ascended the throne under circumstances unusually favourable, but he had added to the long roll of crimes for which the day of retribution was at hand.

Adverting to the government of the States of the Church, Mr. Gladstone detailed various cases of outrage and executions in the Romagna, long before the late revolution—acts which, whether perpetrated by their own government or by a foreign soldiery, would nature rally and justly exasperate the most patient people Wanton and deliberate murders at Perugia the speaker established by documentary proofs, and he supplemented these with details of particular instances of illegal exe cutions in Modena, the favourite and pet state o Austria, under the late 'paternal' government. Italy owed much to England, and a heavy debt of gratitude to France; but neither of these countries, nor ever Victor Emmanuel, had created Italian unity: it was the policy which had been pursued by Austria towards Italy that was responsible for this consummation. Mr ·Gladstone closed with this felicitous reference to the manner in which the revolution in Italy had been accomplished:—'Never were changes so great and important effected with so little to raise a blush on the cheeks of those who promoted them. They recall to my mind the words with which Mr. Fox greeted the first appearance of the French Revolution, when he said that it was the most stupendous fabric that had ever been erected on the basis of human integrity in any age or country of the world. Sadly indeed was

that prophecy falsified by subsequent events from causes which were not then suspected; but I believe the words were not far from the truth at the time when they were spoken, and whether they were or not, they are the simple and solid truth in their application to Italy. For long years have we been compelled to reckon Italy, in its divided state—Italy under the friends of the Austrians, Italy the victim of legitimacy, Italy with a spiritual sovereignty at its centre—to reckon it as one of the chief sources of difficulty and disturbance in European politics. We are now coming to another time. The miseries of Italy have been the danger of The consolidation of Italy—her restoration to national life (if it be the will of God to grant her that boon)—will be, I believe, a blessing as great to Europe as it is to all the people of the Peninsula. It will add to the general peace and welfare of the civilised world a new and solid guarantee.'

The debate was continued by Mr. Maguire and Mr. Roebuck, and concluded by Lord John Russell, who vindicated his policy, claiming that it was a national one, and that the country approved it. The discussion terminated without a division. Towards the close of the session Italian affairs were once more discussed, when Mr. Gladstone strongly denied the charge of promoting revolutionary movements in Italy, which had been brought against the Ministry. He also adduced facts and circumstances in justification of his previous indictment against the Duke of Modena, as to the administration of criminal justice in his dominions.

The annual financial statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was produced on the 15th of April Not only was the budget awaited with great interest by the House, but an extraordinary desire was manifested by strangers to be present at its delivery. At half-past eight in the morning the doors of St. Stephen's were opened, and in less than an hour the waiting-room appropriated to those who had tickets for the Strangers Gallery was crowded, while a long stream of person lined both sides of St. Stephen's Hall, in the hope that unforeseen circumstances would arise by which they could procure seats in the gallery.

At half-past four o'clock Mr. Gladstone rose in a densely-crowded House. Commencing with the prefatory intimation that the retrospective portion of the statement he had to submit to the House was mos unfavourable, the Chancellor of the Exchequer observed that in the previous session questions of no ordinary moment had been discussed. 'In the beautiful tragedy of Schiller, Mary Queen of Scots is made to say of herself, "I have been much hated, but I have also been much beloved;" and I think I may say with equal truth that the financial legislation of last year, while I do not mean to contend that it was not unacceptable to many met, as a whole, with signal support from a great body of public opinion in this country.' The past year had been signalised by the commercial treaty with France, by the removal of great national burdens, and by the abolition of the last protective duty from our system; it was a year of the largest expenditure that had

occurred in time of peace, while it was characterised by an unparalleled severity of the seasons. The estimate for the year 1860, excluding the charge for fortifications, was £73,664,000, while the actual expenditure was £72,842,000, leaving a balance of £822,000. In 1859 the revenue amounted to £71,089,000, and in 1860 it was only £70,283,000, making a decrease of £806,000. The actual expenditure of the year 1859-60, as stated, was £72,842,000, which, as compared with the revenue received of £70,283,000, left an apparent deficiency of £2,559,000, but with certain deductions this was reduced to an actual deficiency of £221,000. The estimate of revenue from customs, post-office, &c. was £27,457,000, and the yield was £27,522,000. Whatever might be the loss of excise in a bad year, it was gained by customs; and this was the case last year with regard to corn, which, imported under a nominal duty, produced £866,000; while the deficiency in the barley crop caused an increase of customs in the article of sugar for breweries of £54,000, and the duty on imported hops was £47,000. Tea, sugar, and tobacco had been almost stationary. Touching articles on which duty had been reduced, such as timber, &c., the reduction had been estimated to amount to £663,000, while the loss had actually been only £529,000. An abolition of the differential duties as affecting spirits, made a reduction on brandy of £446,000; but in July an additional duty had been placed on foreign spirits, which was estimated to yield £400,000, so that the reduction was to be only £46,000; and the result had been altogether a gain on spirits of £79,000. The loss anticipated by the reduction in the duty on wine was £830,000, and the actual loss had been £493,000 only. There had been a great increase in the importation of wines, including French wines; though, with regard to the latter, Mr. Gladstone argued that it was necessary for the national taste to undergo some change before the full effect of the reduction of the duty on French wines could be felt. Dealing next with the revenue from excise, he stated that it was estimated at £21,361,000, while it had yielded £19,435,000 only. The deficit arose on three articles—hops, malt, and spirits—which together represented the real sources and points of the failure of the revenue of the year.

In considering the financial condition of the country it was necessary to advert to the growing expenditure. In 1858 the sum voted was under £64,000,000, while in 1861 it was nearly £74,000,000—an increase of £10,000,000 in three years; £9,000,000 of taxes being imposed to meet those requirements, while of temporary resources only £2,700,000 had been called in aid for that purpose. The balances in the Exchequer in March, 1861, were £6,522,000. As regarded the National Debt, £1,000,000 of Exchequer Bonds had been paid off, but replaced by a new set to the same amount. The addition to the debt, exclusive of money for fortifications, was £460,000. As compared with 1853, there had been large remissions of taxation, and unfavourable seasons; but although 1860 was far worse in this latter respect, it would be found that the immediate

and palpable effect of remissions of taxation presented a remarkable contrast. In 1853 there were remitted £1,500,000 of customs duties, which loss was made up, and more, by the end of that year. The gain on the year in excise duties was £900,000. In 1860 the excise ought to have produced a gain of £1,945,000, but it had only produced a gain of £265,000. But the expenditure of 1854 was, of imperial expenditure, £56,000,000; and, of local expenditure, £16,000,000: total, £72,000,000. In 1860 the imperial expenditure was £73,000,000, the local charge £18,000,000: total, £91,000,000, or an increase of £20,000,000 in seven years; and he believed that there must be some reference to this cause in considering the falling off in the elasticity of the revenue.

Mr. Gladstone next dealt with the question of trade as affected by the French treaty. He was prepared to show that if the employment of the people, and other circumstances, had not been such as to yield an adequate revenue in the year, as it had actually proved to be, the condition of affairs would have been far less satisfactory but for the wise and provident legislation of Parliament. Once more he referred to the signal services rendered by Mr. Cobden, and observed, with regard to the part taken by the French Government, 'Looking at the whole course of proceedings, from first to last, no one can conceive a more loyal, thorough, intelligent, unflinching determination than has been exhibited by the Ministers of France, under the animating spirit and guidance of the

Emperor, to give full effect alike to the terms and to the principles and spirit of the treaty, not for the sake of British interest, nor with any mere wish to conciliating England, but for the sake of the interests of France.' With regard to the effect of the measures of 1860, the right hon. gentleman went on to state that the export trade of the previous year was £136,000,000 of declared value (as against £130,000,000 in 1859), and this the largest ever known. There had been an increase in several imported articles: butter, cheese, eggs, and rice gave an increase of £7,000,000 in 1860, as compared with £4,000,000 in 1859; and these were articles on which small customs duties had been The importation of corn had risen from some £17,000,000 in 1859 to £38,154,000 in 1860—a fearful proof of the failing of production in this country, but an equally cogent proof of the value of that legislation which had removed all obstruction to the importation of that article of necessity. of import on which the duties still remained had been about the same. The articles on which there had been a reduction of duty last year were, in value, in 1859, £11,346,000, and in 1860, £13,323,000; while those on which the duty was abolished last year were, in 1859, in value, £15,735,000, and in 1860, £22,630,000, an increase of nearly six millions and a half.

Arriving at the estimated expenditure of the coming year, Mr. Gladstone stated its total to be £69,900,000. The revenue, assuming the continuance of the tea and sugar duties, and an income-tax, he

calculated at £71,823,000, thus leaving a surplus of £1,923,000 over the estimated expenditure. Government had come to the conclusion that it would not be justified in keeping so large a balance in hand, and it was proposed to apply it to the diminution of taxation. There were four articles which would at once present themselves for notice, namely, the tea and sugar duties, the tenth penny of the income-tax, and the paper duty. Mr. Gladstone announced, amid loud cheers, that it was proposed to remit the penny on the income-tax, which had been imposed in the preceding year. 'I think that it would be a most enviable lot,' he said, 'for any Chancellor of the Exchequer—I certainly do not entertain any hope that it will be mine—but I think that some better Chancellor of the Exchequer, in some happier time, may achieve that great accomplishment, and that some future poet may be able to sing of him as Mr. Tennyson has sung of Godiva—although I do not suppose the means employed will be the same—

## "He took away the tax, And built himself an everlasting name."

But the business we have before us is of a much humbler order.' The remission of the penny in the income-tax, continued the right hon. gentleman, would cause a loss in the current financial year of £850,000. Renewed plaudits greeted the announcement that it was proposed to repeal the duty on paper on the 1st of October, making a loss of revenue in the year of about £665,000. There would thus be left a surplus of

£408,000. No case had been made out against the minor charges on commercial operations, and it was not proposed to remit them. The portions of the reduced income-tax, and the duty on paper, would be provided for by the China indemnity, and reductions in military estimates. It was only proposed to re-enact the incometax and tea and sugar duties for one year. The Chancellor of the Exchequer thus concluded his statement:—

'We have seen this country during the last few years without European war, but under a burden of taxation, such as, out of a European war, it never was called upon to bear; we have also seen it last year under the pressure of a season of blight, such as hardly any living man can recollect; yet, on looking abroad over the face of England, no one is sensible of any signs of decay, least of all can such an apprehension be felt with regard to those attributes which are perhaps the highest of all, and on which most of all depends our national existence—the spirit and courage of the country. is needless to say that neither the Sovereign on the Throne, nor the nobles and the gentry that fill the place of the gallant chieftains of the Middle Age, nor the citizens who represent the invincible soldiery of Cromwell, nor the peasantry who are the children of those sturdy archers that drew the cross-bows of England in the fields of France—none of these betray either inclination or tendency to depart from the tradition of their forefathers. If there be any danger which has recently in an especial manner beset us, I confess that, though it may be owing to some peculiarity in my position, or some weakness in my vision, it has seemed to me to be during recent years chiefly, in our proneness to constant, and apparently almost boundless, augmentations of expenditure, and in the consequences that are associated with them. . . . . Sir, I do trust that the day has come when a check has began to be put to the movement in this direction; and I think, as far as I have been able to trace the sentiments of the House, and the indications of general opinion during the present session, that the tendency to which I have adverted is at least partially on the decline. trust it will altogether subside and disappear. . . . . The spirit of the people is excellent. There never was a nation in the whole history of the world more willing to bear the heavy burdens under which it lies-more generously disposed to overlook the errors of those who have the direction of its affairs. For my own part, I hold that, if this country can steadily and constantly remain as wise in the use of her treasure as she is unrivalled in its production, and as moderate in the exercise of her strength as she is

rich in its possession, then we may well cherish the hope that there is yet reserved for England a great work to do on her own part and on the part of others, and that for many a generation yet to come she will continue to hold a foremost place among the nations of the world.'

Had not his budgets of 1853 and 1860 already lifted Mr. Gladstone to an equality with the great Finance Ministers of the past, his statement of 1861 would have entitled him to take this distinguished The House vibrated to his 'touch' like an instrument of music to the 'touch of genius.' As a writer in the Daily News observed, 'The audacious shrewdness of Lancashire married to the polished grace of Oxford is a felicitous union of the strength and culture of Liberal and Conservative England, and no party in the House, whatever may be its likings or antipathies, can sit under the spell of Mr. Gladstone's rounded and shining eloquence without a conviction that the man who can talk "shop" like a tenth muse, is, after all, a true representative man of the market of the world.' Another writer, in the Illustrated London News, sketching the scene on the production of the budget, said, 'Among those who ought to be judges there is an almost unanimous opinion that, take it for all in all, this was the very best speech Mr. Gladstone ever made. As we now know, he was conscious that he had a pleasant surprise in store for those hearers who had come to listen to a woful palinode, and there was a lurking sense of triumph over his avowed opponents, and still more over his skin-deep friends, which gave a lightness and a buoyancy to his demeanour which of course spread to his audience. It even gave a raciness to his occasional

flights of humour. His quotations were happy an neatly introduced, and that in Latin was loudly cheere by the gentlemen below the gangway, probably because they not understanding it, it had a great effect upo But the chief merit of the speech, in reference to its object, was the remarkable dexterity with which: appealed to the tastes, feelings, and opinions of bot sides of the House. At one sentence, delivered with h face half turned to the benches behind, Mr. Bright woul break out into an involuntary cheer, at once both nature and hearty; while the very next moment the orate would lean, with a fascinating smile on his countenance over the table towards gentlemen opposite, and ministe to their weaknesses or prejudices with equal power an Indeed, at times one could not but be re success. minded of Sir Joshua's famous picture of Garric between tragedy and comedy, the attitude and expres sion of face possessing that duality which the gres limner has so marvellously portrayed in the picture i question. In every possible respect it was a master piece of oratory; and as it in the result actually le to something tangible—that is to say, to a surplu and a reduction of taxation—it was in every sens triumphant.'

Yet there was a fly (if a small one) in the pot cointment. Although the budget was regarded generall in a very favourable light, Mr. Bentinck made a fier personal attack on Mr. Gladstone, alleging that he policy had long been one of antagonism to Britis agriculture. The task of demolishing the Chancelle

of the Exchequer was, indeed, undertaken at various times during the session, both by Mr. Bentinck and Lord Robert Montagu, but the records of the House show what chance 'Thersites had in a tongue-contest with Ulysses.'

The repeal of the paper duty continued to be viewed with great disfavour by the Conservatives, and on the motion for going into committee upon the propositions of the budget on the 22nd of April, this and other parts of the financial scheme were strongly attacked. The debate lasted for four nights. It was opened by Mr. T. Baring, who urged the House to pause in the removal of any duty which would not give an impetus to the revenue, unless there was a great reduction of expenditure. Several members disputed the existence of Mr. Gladstone's surplus, and Sir S. Northcote urged that that was not a time to propose the surrender of a large amount of revenue.

Mr. Gladstone replied generally to the criticisms which had been passed upon his scheme. It had been objected that there was no surplus, and that it was the interest of a Government to make out a surplus: but there were others who had an interest in showing there was none; there were prophets last year as much pledged to a negative as he was to an affirmative. Examining in detail the calculations upon which the arguments against a surplus were founded, he pointed out their inaccuracies, and justified his own calculations. The estimate of the amount to be received from China was a perfectly sound one, and he demurred to the

doctrine that the merchants were to be paid first. inland revenue estimates had been framed with th concurrence of able and experienced officers, and h demonstrated the cautious manner in which the produc of the income-tax had been computed. The estimate were based upon the expectation of an ordinary seaso and ordinary circumstances, and he never had a stronge conviction than that there was likely to be an exces over the estimated revenue. As to the disposal of th surplus, he balanced the claims of tea and sugar on th one hand and paper on the other. The reduction of th duties upon articles of popular consumption was not th first object kept in view by Sir Robert Peel in 1849 but the liberation and extension of trade; this principl lay at the root of our reformed financial policy, and ha governed almost every budget. He urged that th course he had taken in comprising the repeal of th paper duty with other items of the budget in one bil seemed to him a fair and legitimate mode of meetin, the difficulty which had occurred with the House c Lords, while the remission of the duty was accompanie Mr. Gladston by a reduction of the income-tax. concluded by demanding that if his financial scheme wa opposed to the real opinion of the House, it should b declared by the test of a division, instead of being dallied with in long-drawn out and aimless debates.

The opposition did not assume the definite form of a division, but Mr. Disraeli announced that in committee he should ask the House whether any remission of indirect taxation should not take place on the dutie

on tea, and take the sense of the House thereon. resolution imposing the income-tax was agreed to withdivision. After an abortive amendment by Mr. Hubbard, Mr. Gladstone moved a resolution to continue until the 1st of July, 1862, certain duties on tea, sugar, and other articles of the same class as sugar, which had been popularly, though not accurately, described as war duties. He recapitulated his arguments that since 1846 remissions of duty had been proposed less for the benefit of the consumer than for the abolition of Protection and the liberation of trade. also showed that the motion of which Mr. Horsfall had given notice—for the reduction of the duty on tea to 1s. per lb.—would have a destructive effect upon the surplus by the loss of £950,000; and he referred to examples to prove the influence of postponing duties in paralysing the revenue and diminishing consumption, the consumer having to wait long before he derived benefit from the remission. The reduction might be desirable, but absurd and inflated representations had been indulged in as to the effects of the change. maintained that the remission of duties, although nonrecuperative, was in perfect harmony with the views of the late Sir Robert Peel, who desired to augment the means of employing labour. The reduction of the duty on tea would only give an impulse to foreign labour, whereas the remission of the paper duties would stimulate British labour in the manufacture of paper and the produce of agricultural fibre, while the removal of the excise regulations would relieve the trade from restrictions that operated as a check upon it by stintir and repressing enterprise. Mr. Horsfall's amendment was supported by Sir S. Northcote and Mr. Disraeli, by on a division there was a majority of 18 in favour the Government, the numbers being—For the amendment, 281; against, 299.

The Palmerston Government undoubtedly adopte a bold course in supporting Mr. Gladstone in his dete mination to include all the chief financial proposition of the budget in one bill, instead of dividing them in several distinct bills. This was an effectual, and, under tl circumstances, a legitimate circumvention of the Hou of Lords in its hostility to the proposal for the repeal the paper duty. The attitude of the Opposition in th Commons showed their chagrin over this potent mean which had been devised by the Chancellor of the En chequer for the settlement of a vexed question. the budget as a whole came on for second reading o the 13th of May, it was objected that such a procedu was contrary to precedent and constitutional usage, the it was intended to limit the power which the House Lords possessed and were accustomed to exercise wit respect to each bill individually of adopting or rejectin it in toto, and that it left them no alternative but t accept any obnoxious clause that might be inserted i the bill, or to throw the country into confusion b rejecting the entire financial proposals of the Govern ment. Sir James Graham made a powerful defence ( the Government. While admitting that the Lords ha exercised an undoubted privilege in rejecting the Pape

Duty Bill, he as decidedly questioned the policy of their course in refusing assent to a bill relating to finance on financial grounds. This was such an innovation on established formula from the Revolution down, that he thought the equally constituted right of the Commons to include impositions and remissions of taxation in one bill should be adopted, with a view to check any attempt at invading their independence.

Mr. Gladstone was subjected to several violent personal attacks at this juncture, and of these none was more bitter or more violent than that of Lord Robert Cecil (Marquis of Salisbury) in the House of Commons. His lordship, who could with difficulty obtain a hearing from the House, described the budget as a personal budget. 'They had no guarantee for it but the promises of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and experience had taught them that he was not a financier who was always to be relied upon.' Amid loud cries of 'Oh! Oh!' the noble Lord proceeded to say that on a former occasion he had described the policy of the Government as one only worthy of a country attorney; but he was now bound to say that he had done injustice to the attorneys. The attorneys were very humble men, but he believed they would have scorned such a course as that of her Majesty's Here the interruptions and cries of 'Oh!' were so continuous that for some time Lord Robert Cecil was unable to continue his speech. He declared that the course which Ministers had adopted was one distinguished by all the ingenuity of legal chicane.

In any other place it would be called a 'dodg Americanised finance was to be a consequence Americanised institutions. He thought the House Commons ought to mark its peculiar indignation at t way in which it had been treated by the Chancellor the Exchequer. So long as he held the seals of off there was neither regularity in the House of Commonor confidence in the country.

To this intemperate attack Mr. Gladstone cond scended no reply; but in defending his policy a fe days later, the right hon gentleman said there had be personal matters introduced in the course of the deba which he thought it best to pass by, but legitims criticisms upon his proposed plan with regard to the t bills before the House he should endeavour to me Proceeding to discuss the constitutional question, adduced a great variety of precedents, showing the power of combination of different provisions in t same financial measure exercised by the House Commons to a wider extent than in the present bi He observed that the practice was not only justified ! precedent, but by reason and convenience, the sever matters in the bill, essentially homogeneous, bein items of one and the same account. It was the doctrin of the Constitution that to originate matters of finance was the exclusive right and duty and burden of the House of Commons, and to divide this function betwee two distinct and independent bodies would lead to utt confusion. Referring to Mr. Horsman's objection the the budget gave a mortal stab to the Constitution, I

said, 'I want to know what constitution it gives a mortal stab to. In my opinion it gives no stab at all; but, as far as it alters, it alters so as to revive and restore the good old constitution which took its root in Saxon times, which groaned under the Plantagenets, which endured the hard rule of the Tudors, which resisted the Stuarts, and which had now come to maturity under the House of Brunswick. I think that constitution will be all the better for the operation. As to the constitution laid down by my right hon. friend, under which there is to be a division of function and office between the House of Commons and the House of Lords—with regard to fixing the income and charge of the country from year to year, both of them being equally responsible for it, which means that neither would be responsible—as far as that constitution is concerned I cannot help saying, that in my humble opinion the sooner it receives a mortal stab the better.'

Mr. Gladstone's course was approved as constitutional by Sir William Heathcote, his colleague in the representation of the University of Oxford, and also by Mr. Walpole, chairman of the Committee of Precedents in the preceding year. The influence of these eminent Conservative members had great weight, and although Mr. Disraeli—in condemning the financial policy of the Government—said Ministers had created an artificial surplus in order that they might perpetrate a financial caprice, this protracted debate ended without a division, and the bill was read a second time. The House subsequently went into committee, after an abortive motion

by Mr. Newdegate, but upon arriving at the clause repealing the paper duty, another long discussion arose, and all the arguments before advanced against the repeal were once more repeated.

This proved to be the most critical and formidable stage at which the bill had yet arrived, and in some quarters the fall of the Government was confidently predicted. Able speeches were made from different points of view by Mr. Disraeli, Lord John Russell, Mr. Cobden, Mr. Baring, Lord Palmerston, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The last-named speaker, alluding to a conflict of opinion between Mr. Baring and Mr. Cobden, said that it was necessary to weigh the value of their comparative authority; and he contended that the latter had done more than any man living or dead to promote the principles which had brought about a state of things that had made the country as Conservative as it was said to be, while on every occasion the former had opposed those principles; therefore Mr. Cobden was best qualified to advise the House at that moment. The repeal of the paper duty was just and to be expected; it had been demanded both out of doors and in the House. Mr. Gladstone replied to the arguments advanced by his opponents, and combated the assertions which had been made, that all his principles of finance and politics were identical with those attributed to Mr. Bright, with some of which he did not sympathise. He fully sympathised with him, however, in the great commercial doctrines which had conferred such blessings on the community; and as regarded the

legislation founded on those doctrines, it was not now at its initiation, but its conclusion. He anticipated and expected from the House that its decision would not only be faithful to its own former acts, but that it would contribute to the future and permanent welfare of the country.

The result of the division was awaited with great anxiety; and when the position of the tellers revealed the fact of the majority being for the Government, the announcement of the numbers was delayed for some time by the vigorous cheers of the Ministerialists. Order having been restored, the figures were found to be as follows—Ayes, 296; Noes, 281 majority for Government, 15. The bill passed the Commons, and was sent up to the Lords. The Duke of Rutland moved its rejection, but the Earl of Derby, under a due sense of the gravity of the position, advised that the motion should not be pressed. In doing so, notwithstanding, he indulged in a severe attack upon Mr. Gladstone. The amendment was withdrawn, and the bill eventually became law. By this means was averted one of those constitutional conflicts between the two Houses of Parliament, which are fortunately of rare occurrence in our Parliamentary history.

A discussion arose during this session respecting the results of Mr. Gladstone's mission to the Ionian Islands. Mr. Maguire moved for papers and correspondence relative to the mission, and others in continuation, affecting the subsequent administration of Sir Henry Storks as Lord High Commissioner. He alleged that the people of the Ionian Islands · were not contented with the rule of England, and that information on the subject ought not to be withheld. The whole course of events up to the present time proved that annexation to Greece and the establishment of their nationality was the wish of the Ionians. He contended that England should obtain the concurrence of the other Powers to her giving up this protectorate and the annexation of the Ionian Islands to Greece. Replying to this speech, the Chancellor of the Exchequer said the Government had no desire to withhold information, but for the sake of the peace of the Islands it was not deemed advisable to produce the papers. He had not repented having undertaken his mission to the Ionian Islands, his object being to place their relations with this country on a more satisfactory footing, by the offer of institutions founded on the highest principles of constitutional liberty. The people set a high value on nationality, and he protested against that sentiment being treated with ridicule; but it had been traded in by selfish demagogues. The best classes, although desiring to hail the coming of Hellenic nationality, distinctly declared that the time had not yet arrived for its attainment; while the feeling of the great body of the people was that of kindness and even gratitude to England, and they certainly preferred her rule to that of any other foreign Power. England had no selfish interest or advantage in the retention of these Islands, but was bound to retain them in

the interest of Europe. There was no evidence that Greece desired this union, even if she were herself in a different political and social position from that which she actually held. He admitted that the Government of the Islands was not free in the sense in which that word was understood in England, and there was an incongruous mixture of free and despotic institutions, which could only be remedied by reconstruction. He had offered the Ionian Islands an entirely free constitution, which had not been accepted. With the offer of the Government to produce such papers as they thought proper, the motion was withdrawn.

We have seen, in a previous chapter, that the Ionian Islands were ultimately ceded to Greece.

Mr. Gladstone's financial measures for 1862, while not involving such momentous issues as those of the preceding year, nevertheless encountered considerable opposition. Though the budget speech of the 3rd of April proved to be another tribute to his capacity as a Finance Minister, and though it excited considerable interest, it contained no passages of special rhetorical excellence. It was a business-like statement of the monetary position of the country, with philosophical diversions upon the subject of national finance. When there are no striking novelties expected or assured, it would require more than the genius of a Pitt to make a budget enthralling. Prefacing his address by the remark that the statement he had to submit was of a simpler character than its immediate predecessors, the Chancellor of the Ex-

chequer announced that the real expenditure of the past year was much greater than the estimate, by means of supplementary grants in 1861 and 1862, principally in reference to the despatch of troops to Canada and a small amount for China; so that the actual expenditure of the past year was £70,878,000. The total expenditure of the year 1860-61 was £72,504,000. The revenue last year was £69,670,000. This was a decrease, taking into account circumstances connected with the financial year, of £809,000. This must be considered satisfactory, when it was remembered that in 1861-62 they had parted with three items of revenue—by reducing the income-tax one penny in the pound, making £850,000; the paper duty, involving a loss on the last six months of the financial year of £665,000; while no malt credit had been taken up, as was the case in 1860-61, to the extent of £1,122,000. In the face of a diminished trade with America, which amounted to £12,609,000, our exports having sunk from £21,667,000 to £9,058,000 the depression arising from want of cotton—and after a harvest which, though good in quality, was deficient in quantity, there had been an increase in our sources of revenue to the extent of £1,828,000. It was not a fact that the revenue was declining. In the customs, on the first three quarters of the last year there was an increase of £468,000, but in the last quarter there had been a decrease of £100,000. Yet although the gross revenue had fallen off by £609,000, the customs had exceeded the estimate by £464,000, the stamps by £130,000, taxes by £10,000, the income-tax by £15,000, and the

miscellaneous by £81,000. In the excise there had been a falling off amounting to £456,000; there had been a loss on spirits, hops, and paper. With regard to the estimates, that of the China indemnity, which had been placed at £750,000, had only realised £478,000 up to September, but when the two quarters due in March were paid, there would be a gross receipt of £658,000. There were other deductions which would make the whole sum actually received this year from this source only £266,000. Mr. Gladstone then stated that he estimated the expenditure for the coming year as follows:— For the interest of the public debt, £26,280,000; the consolidated fund, £1,900,000; the army, £15,300,000; and the militia, £700,000. The navy was estimated at £11,800,000. The miscellaneous estimates were £7,819,000. The revenue departments were estimated at £4,750,000; the packet service, £916,000; and a vote for China would be asked of £500,000. The total estimate was £70,040,000—an announcement of expenditure which created considerable surprise in the House. The estimate of total revenue would be £70,190,000, which would leave a balance of £150,000 compared with the expenditure. The question arose whether new taxes were to be imposed. He (Mr. Gladstone) had entertained not long before the hope of being able to remit taxes, but subsequently there appeared a probability of heavy expenditure, and there was now the prospect of additional taxation.

Looking to our resources, everything was favourable except as regarded our relations with America. There

had been a great improvement in our exports to the United States, but it was in reference to cotton that anxiety must be felt, and the prospect in that respect was not improving. But examining the results of our trade with France since the treaty had come into operation, there had been in 1861-62 a real increase, as compared with the previous year, of £3,039,000. There had also been an increase of foreign and colonial exports in connection with the treaty, amounting to £4,572,000. The total result of the operation of the treaty for 1861. 62 was over £10,000,000. It was unnecessary again to congratulate the author of the treaty, whose services would become matter of history. The Government had come to the conclusion to do without a surplus, and to impose no new taxes, reserving to themselves the privilege of taking the necessary steps to meet any contingency which might arise. There could be no remission of taxes after the figures which he had brought forward. The burdens of the country, however, would be lighter by £600,000 or £700,000. After alluding to the demands which had been made upon the Government by various interests, Mr. Gladstone indicated certain minor changes he proposed to make in the inventory duty in Scotland, a moderate charge of an eighth per cent. upon all loans raised in this country, and upon supplementary licenses to publicans to supply fairs; and he then touched upon the spirit duties. There had been a falling off last year below the estimate; but as it was proved not to have arisen from an increase of illicit distillation, but from a diminished

power of consumption combined with the increased sobriety of the people, it was not proposed to deal with the spirit duties. The sugar duties, being classified duties, were unequal in their pressure; but the difficulties of removing this classification were so great that no change could be effected without a complete inquiry into the subject, and he would consequently be prepared to assent to a committee for the purpose. With regard to the malt credits, no case for a change had been made out, and an alteration would deprive the revenue of £1,300,000 a year. The minor duties on exports and imports, while entailing an amount of labour in collection which gave them a claim to repeal, yet amounted to £182,000; and with a surplus of £150,000 it was not possible to deal with them, besides which they afforded a means to the Board of Trade of obtaining valuable statistical information. But he was willing to grant an inquiry into the subject. With regard to the wine duties, there was a favourable increase in the trade; but on the whole, it was determined to retain what was called the alcoholic test, but altering and modifying it by reducing the four scales to two, admitting all wines from 18 to 26 degrees of alcohol at a duty of 1s., while from 26 to 42 the scale would be raised from 2s. 5d. to 2s. 6d., and above 45 an additional duty of 3d. on every additional rise of strength. This would yield a net gain of £15,000 a year to the revenue. Coming to the hop duties, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that it was not possible to surrender duties which yielded £300,000 a year on the average.

He proposed, however, to do something in the way of commutation, by re-adjusting the system of brewers' licenses and including in them a charge for the hop duty; while, at the same time, relief would be given to smaller brewers in respect of the charge for their licenses. The result of this plan would be to secure to the revenue nearly as much duty as now, while it would cause a complete free trade in home and foreign hops. The customs and excise duty on hops would be repealed from next September; and it was also proposed, a regarded private brewers, to exempt from license all brewing carried on by the labouring classes. By this financial operation, there would be a loss to the revenue of £45,000.

Having announced that the House was now is possession of the proposals of the Government, MI Gladstone reviewed the financial results of the past thre He corrected an erroneous impression that the public expenditure was still growing, for that of 1861 was less than that of 1860, while in the year ensuing there was a decrease in the estimates of over £700,000 Indeed, putting aside new items of expenditure which had never been included in the estimates before, the actual diminution was £1,700,000. But the level of our expenditure still demanded attention, for it was a higher level than could be borne with comfort and satisfaction by the people, or than was compatible with a sound condition of finance. The growth of expenditure was partly owing to the growing wants of the country; then to a sense of insecurity which had prevailed in the

country; next to the influence of the establishments and expenditure of other nations; and lastly, to special demands which had arisen out of exigencies which had sprung up,—demands which were in substance, and in everything except the name, war demands. respect to the state of establishments and expenditure abroad,' said Mr. Gladstone, 'I do not know whether hon. members, in their perusal of the journals, and in their observation of the condition of other countries, have fully comprehended what a race the Governments of the world are running, and at what a fearful pace outside of England national obligations are now in course of accumulation.' Nearly all countries were in the same predicament, and the only flourishing budget he had seen was that of the Ottoman Empire. During the last twenty years France had added 250 millions to her debt, of which 180 millions was not attributable to war expenditure. Austria and Russia had added to their debts, and the financial year of 1861 alone had added to the State debts of all the great countries 200 millions of money. England had not added to her debt, but among extraordinary expenses there was the cost of the war with China, which had been £7,054,000. In the last three years, what might be called war expenditure, including China, New Zealand, and the despatch of troops to North America, was £8,600,000. To meet this extraordinary expenditure the income-tax had risen since 1859 by three millions, and including the spirit duties and other imposts, there had been taxes imposed exceeding five millions. The taxes reduced or

abolished amounted to over four millions. Their extraordinary resources were now at an end; and if they ·looked into the future, and asked themselves how provision was to be made for it, they must make their reckoning without these resources. About eleven millions had been devoted in the last three years to extraordinary expenditure, of which six millions had been met by extraordinary resources, and five millions by taxes drawn from the people. As regarded the revenue, it had increased since 1858-59 by upwards of four millions in 1861-62. We had passed through exceptional years without going into the market for loans, but—as he had remarked—all other extraordinary resources were now exhausted, and to meet casualties which might occur, it was only to ordinary sources of revenue we had to look, and any difficulty which might be anticipated was only to be met by the application of the principles of true and strict economy.

This budget was described as a strictly stationary one; the existing amount of taxation being neither increased nor diminished. Its introduction was followed by a long discussion, in which various points of the scheme were objected to; but it was not until the motion for going into committee some days afterwards that the objections assumed a tangible shape. Mr. Disraeli, as the representative of those who distrusted the financial measures of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, opened the debate by expressing his regret that the financial year should commence with only a nominal surplus. Why was

there not a surplus? If the paper duty had been retained, instead of a loss of £850,000, there would have been a surplus of £1,400,000. In the years 1860-61, and 1861-62, there had been a total deficiency of £4,000,000; and in addition to this Mr. Gladstone had anticipated the resources of the country to the extent of £3,500,000. But even this was not the full extent of his prodigality, for it was done at a period when the National Debt had been reduced by £2,000,000, the amount of the terminable annuities. All the rhetorical arts of the Chancellor of the Exchequer could not disguise the critical position of our finances. He maintained that the excuses offered to calm the public mind were utterly fallacious.

Mr. Gladstone, having replied to certain questions of Mr. Bass upon the new brewing licenses, applied himself to the 'historical survey' of the finances of recent years by the leader of the Opposition. With regard to the protest that the mode of conducting the finances of the country was derogatory to the character of public men, the Chancellor of the Exchequer sarcastically observed, 'I will deal strictly with the speech of the right hon. gentleman, and I will endeavour to show how far he, forsooth! is trustworthy when he enters on these surveys. He does not resort to rhetorical artifices! Who ever heard him dealing in figures or sarcasms? It is plain and prosaic information which he delights to lay before the House.' The fallacy of his speech, continued

Mr. Gladstone, was that which ran through hi policy and that of his party-a want of dependenc on the principles of Free Trade, which had give such elasticity to the resources of the country Mr. Disraeli had erred in charging him with exhaust ing by anticipation the ordinary revenue, and wit respect to the failure of the China receipts he me him with a positive contradiction. He had given n personal guarantee of the amount, but he had founde his estimate upon the safest authorities. He reasserte that the past two years were exceptional years. to Mr. Disraeli's own financial calculations, in th only two cases in which he had prepared estimate: not for China, but for England—the tax on check and the duty on Irish spirits-he had egregiousl erred; they had not realised one-third of the sum calculated upon. The repeal of the paper duty wa said to be an improvident proposal; yet the oppo nents of that measure proposed to part with £950,00 of tea duty, which would have been so mucl addition to the alleged deficiency. He was wel content to be called by Mr. Disraeli the most pro fuse Chancellor of the Exchequer on record. He wa satisfied to bear any epithets of vituperation he has already produced or might produce on a future occasion. It was not difficult to bear the abuse o the right hon, gentleman, when he remembered tha far better men than himself had had to suffer it But he should be still more content if the effect of his opponent's speech was to bring the House

and the country to a due sense of the gravity of the financial situation, and the necessity for a reduction of expenditure. With regard to the incometax, he did not desire that it should be permanent; and if the country could be governed by something about £60,000,000 it could be done without—but it could not be abolished with an expenditure of £70,000,000. He did not yet despair of reduction and retrenchment, though he did not look forward to sweeping reductions.

The budget was subjected to a second close examination by Sir S. Northcote, but eventually the House went into committee. On the motion for the second reading of the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill (embodying several of the budget resolutions), Sir S. Northcote again reviewed the financial condition of the country, and referred to a speech delivered by the Chancellor of the Exchequer at Manchester, in which the latter admitted that the national finances were not in a healthy state, because the public expenditure was too large. Mr. Gladstone had added that it would not be difficult to restore our affairs to a sound condition by a reduction of expenditure, if that step should be urged upon Parliament by pressure from without. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, repudiating the construction which Sir S. Northcote had put upon his words, and denying that he had asserted the doctrines imputed to him, replied to the following charges, which he understood were brought against him: -First, that he had disclaimed responsibility for the estimates laid before

Parliament; secondly, that he had not provided a proper surplus of revenue; and, thirdly, that he had taken away supplies by which a surplus would have been provided. Notwithstanding the exceptional circumstances of the time, the Government had reduced the amount of the expenditure by £800,000 to £1,000,000 a year, and would continue the same course year by year. Sir S. Northcote must have been taken in by some vendor of scandalous stories.

The Inland Revenue Bill, after another lengthy discussion, was allowed to pass its final stage. The Lords subsequently indulged their right of criticism very fully, but the financial schemes of the Government ultimately received the sanction of Parliament.

Sir G. Bowyer once more furnished Mr. Gladstone with an opportunity of vindicating the Government and people of Italy from the charges brought against them; and this the right hon. gentleman accomplished, as stated in the journals of the day, with remarkable and convincing eloquence. On the 11th of April, on the motion for adjournment for the Easter holidays, the member for Dundalk, the ardent defender of the temporal power of the Pope, rose to call attention to the state of affairs in Italy. Sir George Bowyer had already expressed himself on this subject quite fully enough, as the House thought, judging from its attitude of mingled amusement and impatience on this occasion. The hon member repeated his stock arguments against the recognition of the kingdom of Italy, and again informed the House that the British

flag was regarded as the harbinger of revolution. G. Bowyer's unrivalled capacity for ignoring the march of events was undeniable, and was generally conceded by the House and the country; and Mr. Layard had the former with him when he said that he had never heard any speech in that House which had met with so little sympathy. Mr. Layard further put the question into a nutshell, when he observed that in three short years a people previously down-trodden and humbled had raised themselves up almost to the enjoyment of full and entire liberty, and were using that liberty with wonderful moderation. This was a change as great as though the sun should beam forth at midnight. Mr. Pope Hennessy-who on these occasions was always the Pythias to Sir G. Bowyer's Damon—outdid even his friend in his prognostications. He expressed his conviction that before another debate took place on this subject in the House, the bubble of Italian unity would have burst.

Remembering now how nobly the Italian struggle ended, the most unpleasant and inconvenient reading which could be recommended to these political Cassandras is their unfulfilled prophecies of a past generation.

Mr. Gladstone began his masterly speech by observing that there was a great deal of force in the objection to a discussion in that House on the internal affairs of Italy, an act which was scarcely consistent with the respect due to a friendly Power provided with an arena of its own for such a discussion. He did not wish to use unparliamentary language, but if the words

paradox and credulity were not unparliamentary, he desired to appeal to the House whether an extraordinary power of paradox and a marvellous capacity of credulity had not distinguished the whole of the address of his hon. and learned friend, Sir George Bowyer. This was shown by his statement as to the wonders which Piedmont had effected. 'But to take a particular instance,' continued the Chancellor of the Exchequer, 'there is the downfall of the late kingdom of the two Sicilies. My hon, and learned friend was so kind as to ascribe to me some infinitesimal share in removing from the world the sorrow and iniquity which once oppressed that unhappy country. I should take it as a favour if the charge were made truly, but I claim or assume no such office. Here is a country, which my hon. and learned friend says is, with a few miserable exceptions amongst the middle classes, fondly attached to expelled dynasty—and what happened there? adventurer, Garibaldi, clothed in a red shirt, and some volunteers also clothed in red shirts, land at a point in the peninsula, march through Calabria, face a sovereign with a well-disciplined army of 80,000 men, and a fleet probably the best in Italy, and that sovereign disappears before them like a mockery king of snow! And yet such is the power of paradox that my hon. and learned friend still argues for the affectionate loyalty of the Neapolitans, as if such results could have been achieved anywhere, save where the people were alienated from the It had been maintained that the kingdom of Italy was non-existent, because it had not been recog-

nised by any European power, save England and France. Amidst the cheers and laughter of the House, Mr. Gladstone said that he would not inquire into the literal accuracy of that statement, but so far as the existence of a kingdom depended upon the recognition of European Powers, when it had got the recognition of England and France, it had already made very considerable progress. Although only two years had elapsed since the revolution, such had been the progress of events, that Sir George Bowyer had practically abandoned his case as regarded two-thirds of the Italian kingdom, whilst as to the other third, Mr. Layard had shown that things were improving. He (Mr. Gladstone) regretted the continuance of the occupation of Rome; and he most earnestly hoped, for the sake of the name and fame of France, for the sake of humanity and the peace of Europe, that that occupation might soon cease. After a strong condemnation of the impolicy and injustice of prolonging the temporal power of the Pope, and a statement as to the improved prospects of Italy, the right hon. gentleman thus concluded, by remarking upon the responsibility of the English Government:— 'I do not hesitate to say that I believe a special part of the duty, I may say of the mission, of the Administration of which my noble friend (Lord Palmerston) is at the head, is to be the true expositor of the sense of the people of England on a question so vitally important as the Italian question is, both to the maintenance of every high and sacred principle, and likewise to the future tranquillity of Europe. I believe, too, so far as

the judgment of England is concerned, never was that judgment pronounced on any public question at home or abroad, with greater unanimity or clearness; and that there will not be any chapter of the life of my noble friend on which Englishmen will probably dwell with greater satisfaction than that in which it shall be recorded that, not now alone, but for many years past, before the question had arisen to the magnitude of its present position, through evil report and through good report, he sustained and supported the cause of Italy.

The debate was continued by Mr. Stansfeld, Mr. Maguire, and other members, and concluded by Lord Palmerston, who said that posterity would judge between the English Government and those who had been the champions and advocates of everything that was corrupt, tyrannical, and oppressive in the former institutions of Italy. To that tribunal they would fearlessly appeal for a decision in their favour.

Towards the close of 1862 Mr. Gladstone delivered a speech at Newcastle, in which he expressed his conviction that Mr. Jefferson Davis had already succeeded in making the Southern States of America, which were in revolt, an independent nation. This opinion, coming from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, caused great sensation, and pained many of Mr. Gladstone's warmest political supporters, who were staunch defenders of the North in a struggle which they regarded as virtually turning upon the Slavery question. Only a few weeks before Mr. Gladstone thus expressed himself, Earl Russell had written as follows to Mr. Mason, in reply

to his claim to have the Confederate States recognised as a separate and independent Power:—'In order to be entitled to a place among the independent nations of the earth, a State ought not only to have strength and resources for a time, but afford promise of stability and Should the Confederate States of America win that place among nations, it might be right for other nations justly to acknowledge an independence achieved by victory, and maintained by a successful resistance to all attempts to overthrow it. That time, however, has not, in the judgment of her Majesty's Government, arrived. Her Majesty's Government, therefore, can only hope that a peaceful termination of the present bloody and destructive contest may not be far distant.' Looking at the question apart from all feeling for or against the North or the South, and remembering Mr. Gladstone's position in the Ministry of the day, as well as the fact that the policy of the Government was one of neutrality, his utterance was unquestionably indiscreet. Having been interrogated on the subject on behalf of the cotton shippers, the right hon. gentleman said that his words were no more than the expression, in rather more pointed terms, of an opinion which he had long ago stated in public, that the effort of the Northern States to subjugate the Southern ones was hopeless by reason of the resistance of the latter.

Mr. Gladstone, however, not only discovered that his remarks had offended a large body of the people of this country, but lived to see that his opinion was premature and misjudged. This he fully and frankly acknowledged

in August, 1867, in a letter to a correspondent in New York. 'I must confess,' he wrote, 'that I was wrong; that I took too much upon myself in expressing such an opinion. Yet the motive was not bad. sympathies were then—where they had long before been, where they are now—with the whole American people. I probably, like many Europeans, did not understand the nature and working of the American Union. I had imbibed conscientiously, if erroneously, an opinion that twenty or twenty-four millions of the North would be happier and would be stronger (of course assuming that they would hold together) without the South than with it, and also that the negroes would be much nearer to emancipation under a Southern Government than under the old system of the Union, which had not at that date (August, 1862) been abandoned, and which always appeared to me to place the whole power of the North at the command of the slave-holding interests of the South. As far as regards the special or separate interest of England in the matter, I, differing from many others, had always contended that it was best for our interest that the Union should be kept entire.' Mr. Gladstone had committed an error of judgment, and was by no means measured in his confession of the fact.

An interesting extra-parliamentary utterance by the Chancellor of the Exchequer is recorded in March, 1862, when he acted as spokesman for the donors of a magnificent testimonial to Mr. Charles Kean. This gift to the popular actor and his wife, who had just retired from

the stage, was subscribed for by Etonians, who 'desired to express their appreciation of their eminent schoolfellow'-Mr. Kean having been educated at Eton. The testimonial, which consisted of a variety of articles in silver, was presented to Mr. Kean in the great room of St. James's Hall. The Duke of Newcastle, who was to have acted as chairman, had been summoned to attend her Majesty at Windsor, and his Grace's place was supplied by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as stated. Mr. Gladstone regretted that he had rarely the opportunity of witnessing the talent of Mr. Kean or others, as his own pursuits, they were aware, were not of so agreeable a character. His time was engaged at that part of the day when such talents were exhibited; in fact, he had to 'appear' in another place at the time when Mr. Kean was to be seen pursuing his own professional duties. Referring to the question of the drama generally, and the revival of Shakespeare, the right hon. gentleman said they must look to the fact that Mr. Kean was one who had laboured in the noble and holy cause of endeavouring to dissociate the elements of the drama from all moral and social contamination. That was the work to which Mr. Kean had given many anxious years and all the best energies of his mind; and there were few who could be compared with him for pursuing the profession with all the understanding and the heart He hoped that others would follow him in endeavouring to improve the tone and elevate the character of the English stage.

The session of 1863 promising to be barren in great

legislative enactments, public interest naturally centred in the budget. A considerable surplus of income over expenditure having become a certainty, speculation was rife as to the manner in which it would be employed. The income-tax and the tea duties were the chief topics of discussion, and the enemies of both looked confidently relief. The public mind had decreed, without Ministerial warrant, that the income-tax should be reduced to 7d., and that the 'war duties' on tea and sugar should be abolished. Outside opinion did not prove to be far wrong, and on the 16th of April Mr. Gladstone once more appeared in the character of a financial benefactor. Prefacing his statement by the observation that the causes which had given peculiar interest to the financial statements of the last few years were not such as it was desirable should be permanent, he reminded the House that a resolution had been passed to the effect, that while it was necessary to provide for the defences of the country, the burden of taxation should be dealt with by the Executive. The Government would now put in their answer to that resolution. From 1858 to 1860-61 there had been an increase of over £8,000,000 in the expenditure. The average annual expenditure from 1859 to 1863, including the charge for fortifications, was £71,195,000. Excluding certain items which in their nature did not increase, viz., the interest of the national debt and the charge for the collection of the revenue, he found that the charge for the year 1858-59 was £31,621,000; but in 1860-61 it had risen to £42,125,000—or an increase of ten millions and a

half in two years. Since 1853, that is, previous to the Russian war, the charge had increased by something like £18,000,000. This increase was called for by the public desire to strengthen the defences of the country. As regarded the Government, all he had to say for it was, that, in making the increase in expenditure, it certainly did not outrun but rather fell short of public opinion. It was true that the state of tension in which the finances of the country had been kept for the last four years was occasioned by the policy of the Government. The estimates he had to make for the present year were hopeful, but they must be considered with regard to special circumstances, such as the condition of Lancashire. Mr. Gladstone interposed this just and warmly-applauded tribute to the great northern county:—'Towards that Lancashire, to which up to this time every Englishman has referred, if not with pride, yet with satisfaction and thankfulness, as among the most remarkable or perhaps the most remarkable of all the symbols that could be presented of the power, the progress, and the prosperity of England—towards that Lancashire we feel now more warmly and more thankfully than ever in regard to every moral aspect of its condition. The lessons which within the last twelve months have been conveyed, if in one aspect they have been painful and even bitter, yet in other aspects, and in those, too, which more intimately and permanently relate to the condition and prospects of the country, have been lessons such as I will venture to say none of us could have hoped to learn. For however sanguine may have been the anticipations enter-

tained as to the enduring power and pluck of the English people, I do not think that any one could have estimated that power of endurance, that patience, that true magnanimity in humble life, at a point as high as we now see that it has actually reached.' But the tale he had to tell of the material condition of Lancashire was a melancholy one. The price of cotton, which at the beginning of the previous year was 8d. per lb., had now reached 2s. per lb., so that the distress in Lancashire had reached a condition of the utmost stringency. It was with reference to this portion of the community that the balance-sheet of the year had been prepared. But there was also another cause of depression, viz., the distress in Ireland, of which the people of England had formed no adequate idea. Comparing the agricultural produce of Ireland of the various years, from 1856 to 1862-63, he found that in the last-named year it amounted to £27,327,000, being a decrease of twelve millions on the figures for the previous period—equal to one-third of the whole agricultural products of the country.

These circumstances had necessarily diminished the general revenue. Coming next to the estimates for the ensuing year, Mr. Gladstone said that of expenditure amounted in the whole to £67,749,000. This, however, did not include fortifications, for which Parliament had made other provision. The estimate of the revenue for the year was taken at £71,490,000. There was an increase in the excise. There was a difference between revenue and expenditure, in favour of the former, of

£3,741,000. As to the application of this surplus, the Chancellor of the Exchequer said it would probably be thought the Government ought to proceed to the reduction of taxation, and not speak of augmentation; but there were certain anomalies to rectify. It was proposed to raise the duty on chicory, so as to equalise it with that on coffee. He further announced, amid some murmurs, that clubs should henceforth pay the same duty on liquors as the keepers of hotels and coffeehouses. A person having obtained a beer license through the medium of having first taken a spirit license, should now pay the same duty as one who obtained it without that process. Wholesale beer merchants might, in future, under a £1 license, sell quantities under two dozen bottles. Carriers would be subjected to one-half the duty now paid by stagecarriage proprietors. Railway companies now paid a duty of 5 per cent. on ordinary traffic, but nothing on excursion trains; there would be a general charge in future upon the whole of 3½ per cent. The duty on charitable legacies in Ireland would be assimilated to that in England. He proposed to do away with the exemption from income-tax of endowed charities, though it would be continued as far as buildings and sites were concerned. This change would produce £75,000 on the revenue of the present year, which, with other items, would be added to the surplus.

Arriving at the question of the disposition of the surplus, Mr. Gladstone said that the charge of one penny on packages of goods inwards would be dispensed

with, and the charge of 1s. 6d. on bills of lading outwards would also cease at the same time. With regard to the income-tax, it was proposed to make the sum of £100 the point at which a man was taxable, and to fix that of £200 as the point at which he should come under the full force of the tax; to remove the rate of £150 altogether, and to allow the man in receipt of an income of between £100 and £200 to deduct £60 from his taxable income, which would largely reduce the amount of the tax on a pro ratâ scale. After considering the various arguments in favour of a reduction, both of the tea and sugar duties, he had come to the conclusion to choose one rather than divide the reduction between them. The duty on tea would accordingly be reduced to 1s. per lb., making a diminution of revenue estimated at £1,300,000. The loss consequent on the reduction of the income-tax from 9d. and 7d. in the pound to 7d. and 6d., would be £2,350,000 per annum, while a loss would be sustained by the relief to minor incomes of £1,300,000 on the present year. There would be a reduction of 2d. in the pound on the general rate, and thus the whole remission of taxation on the year would be £3,340,000, or, reckoning the total remission, present and prospective, of £4,601,000. After these remissions, there would be left an actual surplus of some £400,000, but with that he did not propose to meddle.

Mr. Gladstone then entered into an elaborate review of the income and expenditure of the country during the preceding four years. In those years eight millions had been paid for war expenditure in China, and the charge for the reconstruction of the navy had been met, and these out of the ordinary resources of the country. Adducing statistics in reference to the trade of the country, he showed that there had been an enormous advance in the consumption of paper, fed by larger imports and a greater manufacture at home. Our trade with America exhibited a decrease of £6,000,000, but in the case of France there had been an increase of over £12,000,000. In nineteen years, during which the income-tax was imposed for the purpose of assisting the development of the resources of the country by means of the remission of taxes on its industry, there had been an extension of the wealth of the country amounting to £65,000,000 of annual income. instituted a comparison between the progress of Great Britain and the condition of other countries, Mr. Gladstone observed finally, 'In framing the estimates of public charge for the year, it has of course been the duty of her Majesty's Government, first and most of all, to keep in view the honour, the interests, and the security of the country; and next to that honour, those interests, and that security, the deliberate judgment given by the House of Commons in the last session of Parliament. But, subject to these considerations, as I trust I may also say, both on my own behalf and on that of my colleagues, it is to us matter of additional satisfaction, after reading the eloquent denunciation of the Finance Minister of France, if, while we submit a plan which offers no inconsiderable diminution of the

burdens of the people, we can also minister ever so remotely to the adoption of like measures in other lands; if we may hope that a diminished expenditure for England will be construed across the Channel as the friendly acceptance of a friendly challenge, and that what we propose, and what Parliament may be pleased to accept, may act as an indirect, yet powerful, provocative to similar proceedings abroad. Gratifying it must ever be to the advisers of the British Crown that the British people should enjoy an alleviation of their burdens; but, over and above the benefit to them, and the satisfaction to us, there will be a further benefit, and a further pleasure, if we may hope that we are allying ourselves with, and confirming such tendencies as may exist elsewhere in behalf of peace, of order, and of civilisation, and that we are assisting, in however humble a degree, to allay unhappy jealousies, to strengthen the sentiments of goodwill, and to bring about a better and more solid harmony among the greatest of the civilised nations of the world.'

Mr. Gladstone spoke for three hours, and for the first time one of the Queen's sons—Prince Alfred, accompanied by Prince Louis of Hesse—attended the delivery of a budget speech. Upon its conclusion, Mr. Disraeli had nothing to urge against his rival's scheme. Indeed, as soon as the Chancellor of the Exchequer arrived at his survey of the trade and resources of the country, the leader of the Opposition left the House.

The two leading features of the budget—the remissions on the tea duty and the income-tax—were very

popular with the country. Minor details were of course objected to by those classes whom the changes directly affected, the proposed extension to clubs of the license duties paid by hotel and coffee-house proprietors offending an influential class, whose opposition eventually resulted in the proposal being withdrawn. the proposition in the budget which excited the greatest hostility was that removing the exemption of charities from the income-tax. On the 4th of May, one of the largest and most influential deputations which have ever waited upon a Minister of State, had an interview with Mr. Gladstone, to urge upon the right hon. gentleman the injustice and the impolicy of extending the property-tax to the funded property of charitable institutions. The Duke of Cambridge, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Earl of Shaftesbury, and others, having expressed their views as to the injurious consequences of the proposed measure, the Chancellor of the Exchequer replied that it would be his duty to state to the House of Commons the reasons upon which the motion of her Majesty's Government was founded. They would leave it to the opinion of the House whether their proposal should receive its free sanction.

The same evening, from his place in the House of Commons, Mr. Gladstone made a powerful defence of his proposition. While he did not affect to disguise his knowledge of the opposition which had been raised against his scheme, and while expressing his opinion that the course he had taken was a wise and prudent one, he admitted that it ought not to be adopted

without the full concurrence of the House. The question was not understood, and he desired to call attention to the nature of the exemptions it was proposed to remove. As to the character of the charities sought to to be dealt with, nineteen-twentieths of them were death-bed bequests; a species of bequest which the law did not favour, and which were essentially different from charities, properly so-called, which were subject to taxation. He objected to immunities which encouraged men to immortalise themselves as founders. The loss to the State, of the exemptions in question, was £216,000 a-year; while there was a large and growing charge upon the public funds connected with the administration of charities, amounting to about £45,000 a-year; and with other items, the whole loss to the State was nearly half-a-million per annum. He then analysed the charities in three groups—small, middle, and large—affirming that amongst the small there was hardly one which, in itself, was deserving of the toleration of the House, and which had not been condemned by three separate commissions of inquiry, as tending to pauperise people who seek them, and to compromise their independence and self-respect. The middle charities, which were distributed in money only, were in the main not charities in the strict sense of the term; while as regarded the larger charities, they were full of abuses, and often mere vehicles for patronage, and were not fit subjects for exemptions, which, in fact, amounted to grants of public money. 'We propose this measure,' said Mr. Gladstone, 'not as one of financial necessity, but as a just measure. I shall not revert to the hard words which have been applied, but of this I am sure, that no person would have given it a more cordial and conscientious support than the colleague whom we all on this bench so deeply lament; \* and of whom it may be said, as it was said of one of old—

#### "Justissimus unus Qui fuit in Teucris et servantissimus æqui."

We propose this as a just, as a politic measure. We do not presume as a Government, by any means which a Government might dream of, to press it on an adverse House. The House is responsible: we do not wish to show undue obstinacy; we defer to its opinions; but we reserve to ourselves the power of deciding upon the way in which this question is at a future time to be considered. We have proposed this measure to the House as consistent with every principle which has governed administration for the last twenty years; as being just to the taxed community, and fair to the labouring poor; favourable to the great object of elevating their character, as well as of improving their condition. In proposing this measure we feel ourselves impregnable and invulnerable to all rude reproaches, and we recommend it to the courage, the wisdom, and the justice of the House of Commons.'

Mr. Gladstone had financial and substantial justice on his side in making this proposal, and Lord Palmerston stated that it received the support of all his colleagues;

<sup>\*</sup> Sir George Cornewall Lewis, who (as we have already seen) had filled the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer.

but as the sense of the House appeared to be opposed to the scheme, it was withdrawn by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. His arguments, however, were endorsed by a very large and intelligent body of the community, who were strongly opposed to the indiscriminate and mistaken beneficence which was so prevalent.

With the withdrawal of this much-combated proposition, the success of the budget, as a whole, was virtually secured. At a later period, nevertheless, Mr. Hubbard, who had already provoked several contests with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the subject of the income-tax, moved the following resolution:—'That the incidence of an income-tax touching the products of invested property should fall upon net income, and that the net amounts of industrial earnings should, previous to assessment, be subject to such an abatement as may equitably adjust the burden thrown upon intelligence and skill as compared with property.' This was not the first occasion upon which this particular modification had been raised, and Mr. Gladstone again remarked that the plan proposed by Mr. Hubbard would only shift the tax from one set of anomalies to another, and for one class of evils substitute a greater. The plan had not only been rejected by Mr. Hubbard's own committee, but his motion had been negatived last session by a large majority. Those whom he desired to relieve were the class whose fortunes were in the most rapid state of progress and increase. Those who were needy in proportion to the station they occupied were left untouched, or rather they were subjected to additional burdens in

order to give a great relief to those who were in more fortunate circumstances. He (Mr. Gladstone) did not deny that there was a natural feeling in the direction of the motion which had been made, but there were great dangers in agitating subjects like this, which could not be realised except on the adoption of judicious economy and the consequent application of sound principles to the relief of the public. Mr. Hubbard's resolution was negatived by 118 to 70.

During this session, Sir Morton Peto introduced his Dissenters' Burials Bill, the object of which was to enable Nonconformists to have their funerals celebrated with their own religious rites and services, and by their own ministers, in the graveyards of the Established Church. The bill was strongly opposed on its second reading by Lord Robert Cecil, Mr. Disraeli, and Mr. Gathorne Hardy. Mr. Gladstone said that he could not refuse his assent to the second reading of the measure, though some portions of it were open to objection. 'But,' he continued, 'I do not see that there is sufficient reason, or indeed any reason at all why, after having granted, and most properly granted, to the entire community the power of professing and practising what form of religion they please during life, you should say to themselves or their relatives when dead, "We will at the last lay our hands upon you, and not permit you to enjoy the privilege of being buried in the churchyard, where, perhaps, the ashes or your ancestors repose, or, at any rate, in the place of which you are parishioners, unless you appear there as

members of the Church of England, and, as members of that Church, have her service read over your remains." That appears to me an inconsistency and an anomaly in the present state of the law, and is in the nature of a grievance. Mr. Gladstone at a later period discovered that his progress in ecclesiastical and political questions was creating a breach between himself and his constituents. The bill which he now supported was rejected by 221 to 96.

Amongst a variety of questions on which the Chancellor of the Exchequer addressed the House in the course of this session, one calls for brief notice. Few debates in Parliament were more animated than those which arose in connection with the International Exhibition Building at South Kensington. the 15th of June, the House of Commons voted, by a majority of 267 to 135, a sum of £123,000 for the purchase of the seventeen acres of land, which formed the site of the Exhibition building. It was not, however, until a fortnight later that the actual contest for the purchase and retention of the building came on. Lord Palmerston being unable to propose the vote by reason of indisposition, Mr. Gladstone accepted the duty. Whether it was, however, that this duty took him somewhat by surprise, does not appear from the debate, but the Government sustained a severe defeat. Mr. Gladtone proposed a vote of £105,000 for the purchase of the buildings at Kensington Gore, and for repairing, altering, and completing them. He invited the House to look at the question as a dry matter of business. The Government and the House would be in an

awkward situation if, after the important step already taken for the purchase of the land, they should stop short, and nothing more was to be done. He then furnished the data upon which the Government had made the offer of £80,000 to the contractors. Government had to provide for three urgent public wants-the National Portrait Gallery, the Patent Museum, and the Natural History Collections of the British Museum—which they had no means of meeting except by appropriating some portion of the site at Kensington. The attitude of the independent members of the House on this occasion surprised both the Government and the Opposition. Although Mr. Disraeli and Mr. Lowe were anxious to express their approval of the Ministerial scheme, they could scarcely obtain a hearing in consequence of the great excitement which prevailed. On the Government motion being put, it was negatived by a majority of 166, the number of members present being only a little over 400.

This was the last question of domestic importance in a not undistinguished session.

We have now reached that stage of Mr. Gladstone's career when he may be said to have touched his zenith as a financier, though for some years to come we shall still witness him administering the national exchequer with that consummate ability which made him the first of living financiers. Yet not alone in the light of a practical statesman have we regarded him; we have seen him engaged in polemics; we have witnessed his outburst of indignation over the wrongs of

humanity in Southern Europe; and we have endeavoured to trace the results of his long and close companionship with the divine Homer. That which remains of his public life possesses as deep and wide an interest as that which has gone before; while for good or for evil its effects are irreversible, claim a much wider scope, and must exercise a permanent influence upon the national history and welfare.

END OF VOL I.

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